

E M I L I A

Emilia De St. Aubigne

D E

S T. A U B I G N E.

A N O V E L.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ELA, OR THE DELUSIONS OF THE HEART.

*"There is a destiny in this strange world which
" oft decrees an undeserved doom: Let Schoolmen
" tell us why." HOME.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR C. ELLIOT, AND T. KAY,
OPPOSITE SOMERSET-PLACE, STRAND,
AND C. ELLIOT EDINBURGH.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

1607/2504.



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C H A P. I.

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CHAP. I.

DURING that season, when the metropolis is deserted by the gay and affluent, and all, who are not enslaved by rigid necessity, fly from the busy whirl of public life, to recruit their health and spirits, in the chearing bosom of nature, Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, a youthful pair, who, but a

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few months before, had offered up their vows at the altar of Hymen, determined to avail themselves of the pressing invitation of a worthy family, with whom, from early childhood, Mr. Clifton had dwelt, in all the habits of undissembled friendship and social happiness.

The father of this family was guardian of Mr. Clifton's infant years, and so faithfully acquitted himself of that important charge, that Mr. Clifton never experienced any of those evils so frequently attendant on an orphan state. He found this excellent man, in all but name, a parent; and his amiable wife and children claimed, by their kind attention, as large a portion of their young friend's regard, as if they had been united by the ties of consanguinity.



It

It was to the tranquil abode of this estimable friend, that Mr. Clifton prevailed on his charming bride to accompany him, and domesticate during the sultry months of summer.

The mansion of Mr. Everard was a charming recess, situated in one of the most delightful shires this island boasts; and our travellers had just gained a distant view of it from the summit of a neighbouring hill, when a violent thunder-storm coming suddenly on, obliged them to have recourse to the friendly shade of some venerable elms, that formed a deep grove in the valley beneath them. The elements raged with extreme fury; livid fire flashed around, and the dumb inhabitants of the adjoining pastures flocked in multitudes to screen themselves under the umbrageous shelter. Our

travellers looked on every side, hoping to discover some hospitable dwelling, but in vain, until the postillion, whose drenched garments impelled him to explore the centre of the grove, which, from its thick interwoven branches, seemed to promise better security, espied a small pile of building, so embosomed amidst a wilderness of sweets, as to be no way perceptible, but through a narrow white gate, entwined with mingled roses, woodbine, and jessamine, which opened into a long avenue lined with willows, and led to the entrance of this sequestered abode.

Shivering with terror at the scene around them, Mrs. Clifton's heart expanded with joy at this discovery; and they resolved to try if the Hermit of this deep solitude was blest with the sweet spirit of courtesy.—

The

The postilion was therefore ordered to ring at the gate; a neat old woman instantly appeared, hastening down the avenue, and approaching the chaise with a look of amazement, in the language of rustic civility enquired their business.

“ A little house-room, until the fury of
“ the storm abates, is the only boon we
“ crave,” replied Mr. Clifton, smiling at the eager curiosity with which the old woman regarded them. “ And your Honours
“ will be welcome to that, I’m sure,” replied she, “ if you please to follow me;” then turning from them she sighed deeply, and wiped away a falling tear with the corner of a check apron. There was an interesting simplicity in her whole appearance strongly felt by Mr. and Mrs. Clifton; and alighting from the carriage, they

silently followed her into the house.—But, how great was their surprize, as their conductress opened the door of a small, but neatly furnished, parlour, to behold, in this secluded spot, a charming female; whose symmetry of feature, enchanting elegance of form, and melting sensibility of countenance, was enlivened by the glow of perfect health, united with uncommon delicacy, and irresistible sweetness.

In the first moment of astonishment, our travellers gazed in silence, and mentally pronounced her some Fair Divinity: until, on a nearer approach, an expression of touching melancholy, that overspread her lovely aspect, convinced them she was a daughter of suffering mortality. She was intently studying a pair of globes when they entered, but starting at the unusual appearance

appearance of strangers, a crimson blush declared her emotion, and rising from her seat, with such an air of dignified modesty as diffused additional graces over her whole person, she begged her unknown guests to be seated.—The captivating voice and manner, in which this entreaty was conveyed, augmented the surprize of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, and accepting her invitation, they continued to gaze at her in silence, while she regarded them, and the old woman alternately, with looks of inquiry; but the latter soon relieved their mutual embarrassment. “ Their Honours
“ were sadly frightened at the thunder
“ and lightning, Miss,” said she; “ and
“ so, as I am terribly afraid of such bitter
“ weather myself, I made bold to bring
“ them in, without standing about leave;” with those words she dropt her best curt’sy,

and quitted the room, while the lovely girl, with sweet enchanting diffidence, welcomed our travellers to their cottage, expressing the most lively pleasure at its having afforded them so timely a shelter, from the encreasing fury of the storm. Every syllable she uttered added to the surprize of her guests. So elegant, so finished a creature, enveloped amid the deep shades of so profound a solitude, was no common object; but if Mr. and Mrs. Clifton were charmed by her exterior graces, how infinitely were they eclipsed by the far more valuable beauties of her mind.

As the weather was the occasion of this rencontre, it at first proved the topic of their conversation, and, even on this confined subject, how just, and uncommon,

was

was every sentiment of the fair unknown ! How replete with every mark of an exalted, benevolent and discerning mind ! Her extreme youth, the dejection, which in vain she endeavoured to hide from observation, and the tears of the old woman, as they alighted at the gate, were all sources of mental discussion to Mr. and Mrs. Clifton. They scrutinized every object around them, but all was mystery. The house was little superior to a cottage ; but its furniture was expressive of better days.

The weather was now restored to serenity, but our travellers felt inexpressible reluctance to quit this sweet abode, without hopes of again seeing their lovely entertainer, who had so greatly charmed and interested them ; yet, ardent as was this wish, they feared it would be impossible to

effect, when the door of the parlour suddenly opening, a tall elderly lady entered, on whose expressive features affliction had impressed her strongest signature.— She started! and fixing her eyes on Mrs. Clifton's face, exclaimed, "My God! is
"not this Harriot Selwin?" "Yes, and
"you," cried Mrs. Clifton, "are my own
"Mrs. Woodville, my long lost, best,
"most valued friend! Where, where,"
added she, throwing her arms around her,
"where have you thus long concealed your-
"self from me and all the world?"

"I have experienced much sorrow and
"strange revolutions, my dear Harriet,"
said Mrs. Woodville, tenderly returning
the empasioned embrace of her fair friend,
"since those halcyon days when I found a
"delight in assisting your infant ideas; in
"endea-

“endeavouring to guide your expanding
“judgement to the paths of truth and rec-
“titude, and guarding your unsuspecting
“innocence against the blandishments of
“adulation, and those innumerable snares
“to which your rank in life, added to the
“want of a maternal counsellor, - exposed
“you.”

She concluded these words with a look
of enquiry at Mr. Clifton, and Harriet,
smiling, presented him to her, saying,
“she had been compelled to select a friend,
“to fill up the void which the loss of Mrs.
“Woodville had made in her heart; and
“he was the being who appeared to be
“most worthy preference. To him,
“therefore,” added she gaily, “I have
“committed the care of my heart, and fu-
“ture happiness, and the guidance of my

“ life; let me then, dear Madam, im-
“ tune for him a share of your inestimable
“ friendship; for, trust me, you will find,
“ even the partial voice of love is just in
“ pronouncing him, truly deserving so dis-
“ tinguished a favor.” “ Alas,” replied
Mrs. Woodville, casting her eyes mourn-
fully on the ground, “ what acquisition is
“ the friendship of a poor old woman—a
“ mere beggar.”

“ A beggar!” echoed Mrs. Clifton; she
made no reply, but looking around with
a look of tender anxiety at the sweet girl,
who had so effectually secured the admira-
tion of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, and during
her emotions stood behind her bathed in
tears; she strove to suppress a sigh, and a
short interval of silence ensued, she felt
herself betrayed into a weakness at which
she

she blushed, and addressing herself to Mr. Clifton, welcomed him to her humble shed, with all that ardent cordiality which had ever marked her character, and a conversation so interesting took place, as banished for a time, the remembrance of past and present sorrows.

Time had numbered near fifteen revolving suns, since, impelled by misfortune, Mr. Woodville had withdrawn from the haunts of pleasure, in pursuit of those more solid delights, which alone are to be found in an approving conscience, and a well-turned mind.

But long after she was no more known in those bright circles, where once she shone unrivalled for the brilliancy of her understanding, and those lively sallies of wit that distin-

distinguished her conversation, and never failed to ensure the admiration of one sex, and the censures of the other—the father of Mrs. Clifton, who had married the darling friend and companion of Mr. Woodville's youthful days, was blessed with her friendship and frequent society;—when an event, still more afflictive than what she had before experienced, robbed her even of the means of subsistence, and nearly deprived her of life also. At this distressful crisis, a Lady, distantly allied to her, most opportunely stepped in to her aid. She was preparing for an excursion to the South of France, which a declining state of health rendered immediately necessary, and Mrs. Woodville, shrinking from every object that could nourish the remembrance of her sorrows, acceded, without much intreaty,

to the ardent wish of her friend, and became the companion of her tour.

The soul of Mrs. Woodville, alive to every feeling that honours humanity, and is pleasing in the sight of omnipotence, expanded with gratitude for this alleviation of her misfortunes—and she endeavoured to forget every recent wound her heart had felt, in her unremitting attention to her deserving friend;—from her example too, she gained fresh lessons of patience and perfect resignation—for oh!—what sorrow could exceed those of this most excellent and deeply injured lady.

The pangs of ill-requited tenderness to an adored husband, planted the seeds of a complication of disorders, which a long series of almost unheard, of injuries ripened

to maturity, and deprived the world of a blessing of whom it was not worthy. But divine vengeance overtook the author of her sufferings ere she was consigned to the silent grave. He met his death in endeavouring to defend the character of an abandoned woman (on whom he had long doated, and from whom all his errors had originated,) from the reproach she merited: He dared, in a cause like this, in open defiance to the laws of God and man, to draw his sword against his best friend, who honestly condemned his conduct, and earnestly conjured him, ere it was too late, to atone for his crimes to that fair injured faint, who still loved him with fondness, and, like Heaven, was ever ready to pardon and receive a penitent. Such was the counsellor whose life he madly fought; and
justice

justice gave him the reward his cruelties loudly called for.

It was but a few months after his lady went to France, that this event happened; and little cause as she had to regret his death, the dreadful circumstances attending it, proved a heavy addition to her sorrows, which all the tenderness of Mrs. Woodville proved insufficient to alleviate—she languished near two years, in a state to which no description is equal—and then breathed out her pure spirit in the arms of faithful friendship.

It is needless to say how deeply such a scene must be felt by a mind so formed by sympathy as Mrs. Woodville's: she could not restrain the tribute of gratitude, altho' her heart was lifted up with thankfulness to
that

that Being, who in mercy had called her friend from woes unspeakable, to partake in the joys of immortality. She saw her cold clay deposited in its last mansion, and found herself legally invested with a right to her clothes and jewels, the utmost value of which was rather less than five hundred pounds, as she had left the most considerable part in her husband's possession, and her jointure returned to his estate.

With this small pittance Mrs. Woodville resolved to return to her native land, and devote the remainder of her days to solitude. Having put the former part of her determination in practice, chance directed her steps to this romantic spot, where, after bestowing a few embellishments, she fixed her residence, and had dwelt many years secluded from every former

mer

mer friend, for adversity had shewn her how very few merit that appellation.—The old woman, who admitted Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, had been the attendant of her prosperous days, and faithfully followed her through every change of fortune; her, therefore she allowed to accompany her retirement, rather considering her as a sister than a servant—when the Supreme, looking well pleased on her blameless life, chearful resignation, and unnumbered virtues, sent an invaluable blessing to chear her solitude, and gently lead her down the hill of life—in the lovely girl already described, whose early and uncommon adventures she related to Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, as they strolled around a small inclosure behind her habitation, while Emilia was busied in preparations for dinner.

C H A P. II.

“FROM this eminence,” said Mrs. Woodville, as they ascended a small green mount at the end of the garden, “you may see the beach, where my Emilia was snatched from impending destruction, in a manner almost miraculous.”

“The beautiful serenity of a summer’s evening, had induced me to a ramble by the sea shore, when suddenly a storm arose, and a vessel appeared in great distress.—The neighbouring fishermen exerted all their skill to give her aid; but the winds and waves frustrated their humane efforts, and she beat to pieces on the surrounding rocks.

“After

"After witnessing this truly calamitous event, and joining my prayers with those of the unhappy sufferers, I turned from the foaming waters with aching heart, and was silently quitting a scene I could ill bear, when a young gentleman appeared on horseback, followed by a servant. My agitation was too visible to escape him; and slackening his speed, he regarded me with looks of tender enquiry.—I turned around, and again casting my eyes on the wreck, his followed mine, and instantly comprehending the cause of my distress, he sprang from his horse, and hastened to the water's edge, where he discovered two bodies, suspended to a part of the wreck that approached the spot where we stood.

"The governing principle of his soul now evinced itself—eagerly he pointed it out to
me

me—while an emanation of something more than human overspread his fine countenance, and agitated his whole frame. Inspired by philanthropy, he plunged amid the angry waves, and buffetting them with all his strength, endeavoured to reach his prize, but was baffled by their far superior force, and the imminent danger that threatened his life, added to my intreaties, and the persuasions of his almost frantic servant, warned him to retire; when suddenly the furious billows drove the plank nearer, and making another vigorous effort, he caught some floating garments in his arms, and grasping them with all his power, bore the apparently lifeless body, which they infolded, to the shore, and leaving it, flew back to the companion of its danger; but alas! that was conveyed far from us, and in a moment disappeared.

Seeing

Seeing all further hopes at an end, the generous youth returned to the being whom he had snatched from the jaws of death—that being is the dear child of my fondest approbation. A rustic passing by, lent his assistance to convey her to my cottage, where every means was exerted to bring back suspended animation, and Heaven crowned our efforts with success.

“ Who can paint the heart-felt delight which this truly amazing preservation afforded the exalted young man, who had been made the instrument of it?—He was directing his course to a neighbouring seaport, from whence he purposed to embark for some distant region, when heaven selected him for this godlike action.

“ The

“ The exquisite, mental, and bodily sufferings of our fair charge, brought on a dangerous fever, and her life was despaired of. Her noble deliverer took a lodging for himself and servant, in the adjoining village, resolved not to quit the spot, until her fate was determined.—He was in fact the constant inmate of my poor abode, attended the sweet patient sufferer with most unwearied assiduity, and watched her couch day and night, with anxious solicitude and unremitting tenderness; until, after a severe contest with the Grim Monarch, she was restored to our united prayers; and while health began to relumine her cheek, friendship and confidence took deep root in her heart. Often, ere she was able to quit her chamber, did she attempt to clothe the glowing language of her soul in words; but her strength was
much

much unequal to the ardor of her emotions, and her fine eyes often told the gratitude of her heart, while witnessing the tender anxiety, and nameless attentions, of her kind preserver: for while she poured forth her effusions to the Almighty, she could only weep her acknowledgments to him.

“ Greatly was my curiosity awakened to know the little narrative of her early sorrows; but I suppressed every wish that could tend to promote the gratification of it; well assured that her gentle spirit was, at that time, much unequal to a task so truly arduous, when one evening, as we were leading her round a small balcony outside her chamber window, where, with the assistance of our arms, she often enjoyed the benefit of the reviving zephyr, I ob-

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served

served her more than usually thoughtful, and agitated by some internal conflict, until, at length, after repeated efforts—

“ Oh !” said she, looking alternately in both our faces, with an expression of countenance that must have melted the most savage heart, “ what reward can be found adequate to your goodness, best of earthly beings !” Her voice was scarcely articulate ; she paused, and hid her face with a handkerchief. We were all silent, when, pointing to a bench at the end of the balcony, she seated herself on it, and we placed ourselves beside her. A few pearly drops followed each other down her pallid cheek—she turned aside to wipe them off—her emotions seemed subsided into a deep calm, and she resumed the subject at her heart.

“ I have

“ I have long wished,” continued she,
“ for a moment like this, a moment of in-
“ felt serenity, and resignation to my irre-
“ mediable loss. Oh, how ardently have
“ I petitioned the Supreme for strength of
“ mind to tell you all that passes here !”
She clasped our hands between her own,
and pressed them to her heart, in a manner
that will for ever be impressed on my re-
membrance.

“ But, indeed, it could not be,” added
the dear girl, “ my coward spirit funk
“ within me, and refused the task ; but I
“ now feel a tender regret, succeeding the
“ poignant anguish that lately possessed my
“ mind ; and while I reverence you, my
“ preservers, friends—all, all, that the
“ world holds dear to me—truth, grati-
“ tude, and justice, bids me no longer

“withhold the candour and confidence due
“to your unspeakable, your unbounded
“tendernefs.”

“Oh spare yourself,” said I, “my love,
“in pity spare yourself and us, any recital
“that may wound your heart—consider
“your present extreme weakness—already
“we know all that is material to know; we
“know that the precepts of virtue are im-
“pressed on your soul, and the practice of
“them is evidently your highest wish; the
“rest we will wait for the knowledge of, un-
“til a future day. And,” continued I,
after a pause, “there needs no more to
“endear you to my heart, than what I am
“already sensible of; all I wish of you is
“to be happy. Come then,” I added,
rising, “the cold evening air warns you to
“retire;

“ retire; forget every thing, but that you
“ are with those sincerely interested in your
“ present and future welfare, and anxiously
“ desirous to see your health and spirits re-
“ established.”

“ Dear, good lady !” she exclaimed eagerly,
ly, “ but surely it is just you should know
“ something more of her, on whom you
“ thus lavish your invaluable regard.”—
She paused, and I was about to prevent her
enlarging; but anticipating my design,
and resolved to avail herself of the present
opportunity, she thus proceeded.

“ You have snatched from the grave,
“ and, with unparalleled goodness, are still
“ assiduous to render happy, a being who
“ knows not friend nor relative, but stands
“ unconnected and alone in the universe.

“ In a convent, the beams of under-
“ standing enlightened my infant mind,
“ and there I dwelt, until a few days be-
“ fore misfortune brought me to your hos-
“ pitable roof, ignorant of every thing re-
“ specting myself, but the name of Emilia
“ de St. Aubigne.

“ The Lady Abbess seemed to doat on
“ me. I was the favourite of the whole
“ community, and every one seemed eager
“ to give the strongest proofs of their affec-
“ tion, by contributing all in their power to
“ cultivate my mind, and render me com-
“ plete in every valuable and elegant at-
“ tainment. Thus carested, my childhood
“ glided away with peculiar delight; but
“ as I approached maturity, the mysteri-
“ ous cloud by which my birth and rank
“ was enveloped, introduced uneasy sen-
“ sations,

“ fations, and discontent ensued. A pensive
“ habit supplanted my native vivacity, my
“ health began to languish—I avoided
“ those whose converse I had lately sought
“ with ardour, and perpetually wished for
“ the shades of solitude to indulge my
“ sadness.

“ It was not long ere I tasted the fruits
“ of this metamorphosis, in the altered
“ looks and behaviour of all around me;
“ being no longer able to charm by my
“ lively sallies, and dispense gaiety wherever
“ I came, I soon ceased to be the univer-
“ sal darling; and my society became ra-
“ ther shunned than courted, by every
“ member of the community, except a
“ young and beautiful lady, who had been
“ but a short time among the holy sister-
“ hood.

“ From her I experienced every mark of
“ increasing partiality—to her faithful bo-
“ som I committed the secret cause of my
“ dejection, and mutual confidence gave
“ rise to a friendship equally sincere and
“ animated.

“ The Lady Abbess was still kind, but
“ her kindness seemed rather the result of
“ prudence than affection. Her words
“ were the same, but words are seldom to
“ be relied on; her looks and manner
“ were totally changed; and she seemed to
“ regard me with a suspicion that filled my
“ mind with a variety of conjectures; when
“ one day, walking in the gardens of the
“ convent, she pressed me to take the veil,
“ as a certain means to regain the tranquil-
“ lity of my temper, and ensure lasting fe-
“ licity; adding a fear, that the sudden al-
“ teration

“ teration in my person, and manners, pro-
“ ceeded from a concealed entanglement
“ of the heart: to which belief the fre-
“ quent society of several young Noblesse,
“ who visited the boarders of the convent,
“ gave rise.

“ Amazed at a declaration so unexpect-
“ ed, I exerted all my little eloquence to
“ remove her ill-grounded suspicions, but
“ without producing the smallest effect;
“ she only smiled her incredulity, and re-
“ peated, with increased warmth, her ar-
“ dent wish of numbering me among her
“ saints; but I pronounced a gentle, yet
“ firm negative, to this proposal; assuring
“ her all future importunity on the subject
“ would be fruitless; for it was my unal-
“ terable resolve—never to become a
“ Nun.

“ A reply so different from what my na-
“ tural timidity taught her to expect, to-
“ tally baffled every persuasive argument
“ she had been revolving, as likely to aid
“ her design, and obviate every obstacle
“ she thought could impede it. A while
“ she sat, buried in a profound reverie;
“ then rising, with an hauteur of manner
“ and severity of aspect, I had never till
“ then seen her assume, she solemnly assured
“ me, from that happy dwelling I was
“ doomed never to depart, until freed by
“ death; for from the moment of my en-
“ tering those holy walls, I was destined to
“ end my days among the blessed sister-
“ hood.

“ Almost deprived of reason, of a disco-
“ very so cruelly peremptory, so highly
“ repugnant to my inclination, I was in-
“ capable

“capable of attempting a reply, and the
“Abbess left me to digest at leisure, what
“she had communicated. For many mi-
“nutes I sat ruminating on the prospect
“before me, and indulging every sugges-
“tion that could heighten the gloom of
“my apparently inevitable fate; when sud-
“denly a ray of hope darted across my
“perturbed mind, and with swollen eyes
“I stole, unheeded, to the apartment of
“my amiable and lately acquired friend,
“a knowledge of whose woes, taught me
“to think more lightly of my own.

“In the bloom of life, adorned by the
“most shining endowments of mind and
“person, this lovely woman was torn from
“the adoring object of her fondest love,
“and immured by the rigid mandate of
“parental authority within that dreary
B 6 “mansion.

“ mansion. Trifling then as were my
“ conflicts to those that agitated her bo-
“ som, the horrors of a forced seclusion
“ from the world, were surely sufficient to
“ terrify a mind like mine: bending be-
“ neath the pressures of secret dejection,
“ arising from an incessant, but unavailing
“ mental search, after what is hid in the
“ dark and illimitable abyss of futurity; a
“ vain delusive hope of tracing some cheer-
“ ing circumstance to assist me in explor-
“ ing the mystery that secludes me from the
“ knowledge of myself.

“ In the gentle bosom of my fair friend,
“ I therefore relieved my almost bursting
“ heart. She listened with deep attention,
“ and when I had ended my little narra-
“ tive, she embraced me with tenderness,
“ and bade me be comforted. Emilia,
“ I have

“I have hopes,” said she, both for
“you and myself; hopes which, I
“trust, heaven will crown with success.
“A few days hence,” added she, “I me-
“ditate an eternal adieu to this gloomy
“abode.” “Her countenance brightened
“as she pronounced these welcome sen-
“tences, and I seemed to consider her
“as some fair spirit, who had left her na-
“tive skies to effect my deliverance.

“Surprize and joy at first divested me of
“all power of enquiry by what means she
“purposed to accomplish her design, and
“I stood gazing at her with idiot-like a-
“mazement; but she soon collected my
“scattered ideas, by reciting the particu-
“lars of her plan, so artfully contrived
“as to elude the most watchful Argus; and
“she concluded with assuring me, what-
“ever

“ ever was her own fate, I should be the
“ welcome partaker of it.

“ An event so flattering, so unhop-
“ ed for, gave me new life, and banished
“ every unpleasant sensation : as much
“ elevated by transport as I had before
“ been depressed by melancholy, I lavished
“ blessings on my dear consoler, and by
“ her advice hastened to the Abbess, tell-
“ ing her I repented of my opposition to
“ her wishes, and was come to assure her
“ of my implicit obedience, and solicit her
“ pardon. But characters like hers, I
“ found, are not to be deceived by arts so
“ futile. She coolly pronounced her for-
“ giveness, and assured me of the same rank
“ in her affection I had ever held ; but
“ marked every action with the most sus-
“ picious scrutiny ; would not allow
“ me

“ me to be a moment from under her
“ watchful eye, and evidently proved, by
“ her whole conduct, that loudly as she ap-
“ plauded my return to duty, she felt the
“ most unalterable conviction that it was
“ only a stratagem to lull her vigilance a-
“ sleep. Day and night I was the constant
“ companion of her side, and I was even
“ denied the soothing participation of my
“ loved friend.

“ Every ray of hope now vanished, I
“ prayed for her escape, but, endeavoured
“ to reconcile myself to a destiny that how-
“ ever severe, appeared inevitable; and
“ while I still mentally vowed never to take
“ the veil, I looked forward to a life of
“ forced seclusion from every social enjoy-
“ ment as an event little less to be dread-
“ ed.

“ No

“ No language can sufficiently paint the
“ conflicts I endured for many tedious days,
“ when a sudden and dangerous illness, by
“ depriving the Lady Abbess of her reason,
“ released me from her persecutions; and
“ while my heart bled for her sufferings, and
“ almost revolted at the idea of leaving her
“ in a state so truly pitiable, yet motives so
“ powerful spoke to my feelings, and Heaven
“ seemed so graciously to favour the ardent
“ petitions I had offered up for his interpo-
“ sition between me and wretchedness, that
“ to have deliberated, at this important crisis,
“ would have been the highest ingratitude
“ —and I flew with the utmost speed to the
“ kind participator of all my anxieties.—It
“ was the silent hour of midnight, when rack-
“ ed with the most alarming apprehensions,
“ I gently tapped at her chamber-door; re-
“ peatedly I knocked, without receiving any
“ answer.—

“ answer.—That my long and unusual ab-
“ sence had banished all hopes of rendering
“ me service, and she was gone without me,
“ was the dreadful idea that rushed into my
“ mind; and as a last essay to obtain admit-
“ tance, I applied my lips to the key-hole,
“ and whispered her name; when instantly the
“ door opened, and my anxiously expecting
“ friend, pressing me to her bosom, told me
“ her fears of detection obliged her to refuse
“ my entrance, until my well-known voice
“ assured her of safety;—then pointing to a
“ flight of steps, that descended into a dark
“ avenue, and led to an unfrequented part of
“ the garden, she told me the important
“ hour was nearly arrived, and bade me fol-
“ low her.

“ Tortured by fears of prevention, we
“ reached the appointed spot, and after wait-
“ ing

“ing a short time, considerably lengthened
“by our terrifying ideas, the welcome signal,
“a glimmering taper, made its momentary
“appearance on a part of the wall, concealed
“from every distant eye by the thick sur-
“rounding foliage. A ladder of ropes in-
“stantly dropped at our feet; my conduc-
“tress ascended it with alacrity—and I,
“trembling, followed, while her expecting
“lover folded her, enraptured, in his arms;
“and after their mutual transports had sub-
“sided, welcomed me likewise to liberty and
“his future protection. He was an English
“officer, of a noble family, and a vessel
“waited to waft us to his native shores.”

Here (said Mrs. Woodville) the fair narrator ceased; while the recollection of her friend's fate (who perished in that distressful scene from which she had been so
provi-

providentially rescued) threw an additional languor on her mind—and leaning on the arm of her preserver, who, with the most marked attention, had listened to her narrative—we entered the house in silence, and she retired to indulge emotions that were unconquerable. Her sad recital had diffused a gloom o'er all our spirits; and when my guest bade me adieu for the night, a more than usual energy marked his words, and his manner was greatly agitated. I could not, during the whole night, divest my memory of the uncommon vicissitudes that marked the few days of our Emilia.—I revolved them waking on my pillow; and when I sunk into the arms of sleep, they still employed my imagination, and lived in my dreams.

I arose

I awoke the next morning with increased affection for my lovely ward, and was hastening to make my usual enquiries at her bed-side, when a servant brought me a letter, containing these words—

“ I tear myself from you thus abruptly,
“ ever valued lady, unequal to the painful
“ ceremony of bidding you, perhaps, a
“ long adieu. You will, I think, excuse
“ this weakness, and do me the justice to
“ believe, that in my heart the remem-
“ brance of your virtues will exist for ever.

“ With you I leave the amiable Emilia,
“ fully assured that she will neither feel the
“ loss of friend, nor parent, under your ge-
“ nerous protection. In you, Madam,
“ Heaven has given a blessed substitute for
“ all that misfortune may have snatched
“ away

“ away—and if the prayers of a grateful
“ heart can find acceptance, you will not
“ fail of the reward your unexampled
“ goodness merits.

“ Fain would I tell you all that passes
“ in my breast;—but now it cannot be;
“ yet suffer me to assure you, dearest Ma-
“ dam, that the hope of again visiting
“ your sweet abode, softens the pangs of
“ separation, and is the most delightful
“ that ever yet informed my soul.

“ And now, most worthy of women,
“ farewell. May every blessing hover
“ around you, and your lovely young
“ friend—and sometimes deign to bestow
“ a thought on,

“ Your ever devoted,

“ ALLEYNE FITZHORTON.”

An

An involuntary torrent burst from my eyes, as I perused these lines, and in that situation Emilia found me.

“He is gone!” said I, giving her the letter—“Gone!” she exclaimed, glancing her eyes over it—“Gone so soon!—so suddenly!—Oh--unkind---not suffer me “to bid him one adieu!--to bless him for “you! for life, for every thing! Surely “’twas ill judged”—she looked pensively in my face, and added—“nay, *cruel*, “Madam, was it not cruel?”

“He certainly meant it otherwise,” said I, “and perhaps, my dear, he was right—“I doubt not but we shall ere long see him “again.”

This

This cheering hope seemed in some measure to console Emilia; but there still remains circumstances I cannot but regret.

Our mutual anxiety about Emilia had been the constant topic of our conversation; and unsuspecting of his quitting us so precipitately, I never hinted a wish of being made acquainted with his family, or rank in life; nor had the subject ever passed his lips to me. This silence now fills me with a variety of conjectures. The dignity of his manners, the elegance of his person, and the exalted qualities of his mind, certainly rank him among the highest orders of society; and with this mental assurance we must rest satisfied, and look forward to some future period—when every mystery will, I hope, be removed; and he will return, crowned
with

with virtue and happiness, to cement the friendship he has kindled in our breasts.

“It is now” added Mrs. Woodville, after a pause, “near two years since I have enjoyed the blessing of Emilia’s society, and each revolving day convinces me more fully of her worth. Her endearing gentleness, sweet vivacity, and unwearied attention, dispels those embittering reflections which would intrude, and renders me more serenely happy, than when grandeur and abundance shone around.”

Mrs. Woodville ceased; and Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, affected by her pathetic narrative, silently followed her into the house, where a frugal, yet elegant repast awaited them, and Emilia, who had exchanged the plain

plain dress in which they had left her, for one, although equally simple, yet more adapted to heighten her native charms, met them at the parlour door, with a basket of fruit in one hand, and a bowl of cream in the other, intended as part of their desert. She looked like another Hebe; her cheek glowed with additional bloom—a profusion of pale brown hair, that was before concealed under a plain muslin cap, now flowed with graceful negligence o'er her delicate shoulders, and sweet cheerfulness diffused new beauties o'er her whole form.

After a meal rendered truly luxurious, not by an ostentatious display of costly viands, but by the delightful intercourse of congenial minds, Mrs. Woodville seated herself at a harpsichord, one of the few remaining mementos of more affluent days,

C

and

and played some of these compositions, which, in the festive hours of youth, had charmed many a listening ear; but time and misfortune had swept away all that once had skill to call forth every soft attractive power—and the exertion of those talents that reminded her of early scenes, seldom failed to draw tears from her heart; quitting the instrument, she therefore, with a suppressed sigh, requested Emilia to supply her place. The sweet girl complied with a blush of native diffidence; but what amazing powers did she possess!—She executed an Italian composition with a taste and judgment that might honour the first proficient in that enchanting art: but how was the admiration of her auditors heightened, when, at the intreaty of Mr. Woodville, she played a soft melodious air, accompanying the instrument with her voice, whose

whose thrilling quavers might emulate even the Syren, Mara?---Mr. and Mrs. Clifton were unable to restrain their warm encomiums.

The approach of evening now warned them to depart; and when they mentioned the name of Everard, Mrs. Woodville informed them, it was the only family whose acquaintance she had wished to cultivate since her residence in that spot; for often had they met and conversed together, in their rural excursions, with apparently mutual pleasure. Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, pleased with this intelligence, felt less regret at leaving them—and they parted with reciprocal assurances of meeting again very soon.

C H A P. III.

UNAPPRIZED of his young friends, arrival, Mr. Everard was enjoying his accustomed evening walk, on an extensive lawn that fronted his house, as the carriage that held them descended the hill, on whose fertile side his habitation stood ; but turning down a narrow dingle at the extremity of the lawn, where he usually chose to indulge his private meditations, he had not proceeded many steps, when the well-known voice of his beloved ward struck his ear, and turning round, he beheld him, with his fair bride, hastening towards the spot where he stood.

The

The old gentleman's aspect brightened, he seemed inspired with youthful vigour, and quickened his pace, eager to welcome and congratulate his wished-for guests.— He received them both with friendly warmth, wished blessings and happiness might ever attend them, and tenderly embracing Mrs. Clifton, saluted her, as was his constant way, and bad her excuse the bluntness of a rough old man. Such, indeed, was Mr. Everard, untutored in modern refinements, a stranger to every species of guile, and ignorant of what ambition was, (but in theory) : he had spent a virtuous and useful life on the spot of his nativity, and his hoary locks were rendered truly venerable by the uprightness of his conduct. Friendship rested secure in his unquestioned integrity, and the blessings of the poor were daily offered up for him and

his household. He had numbered four-score years in this fluctuating scene of things; but, except the pangs of being parted by death from an adored wife and several beloved children, sorrow had never touched his heart; and agonizing as those dispensations must prove, to every mind not divested of natural affection, yet Heaven never fails to soften the wounds it inflicts, and reconciles us imperceptibly to the inevitable stroke of death.

The constitution of Mr. Everard, therefore, was unbroke by the bitterness of anguish, and his spirit retained its native vigour. Uninjured by any criminal indulgencies, he was now enjoying the blessed fruits of a temperate life, and blameless conduct, in length of days rendered desirable by health, and the whispers of an approving

proving conscience. His milk-white hair, ruddy check, athletic form, and bluntness of manner, brought to Mrs. Clifton's remembrance, every description she had either read or heard of our famed forefathers; his dress seemed likewise formed after the same model, and she could not avoid regarding him as the most striking piece of antiquity she had ever before seen. His house was of the same description, but its embellishments were modern, and expressive of real taste; the gardens were extensive and delightful, Mrs. Clifton felt pleasure grow within her, on contemplating the assemblage of exquisitely alluring landscapes that presented themselves on every side. The romantic wood-crowned precipice, seemed to vie with glowing parterres, shady walks, painted alcoves, and rushing cascades, for her preference; here a

deep grove excluded the noon-day sun, and a lonely temple, in its centre, seemed to woo sweet contemplation to its silent haunts and whisper,

“ Divine oblivion of low thoughted care:”

While bending corn-fields, straggling cottages, the united melody of the feathered choristers, the distant lowing of the herds, and the chearful peasant, singing from his labors, all contributed to heighten the variety of the scene.

Mrs. Clifton, buried in reflections till then unknown, entered a long vista that led to the house, leaning on the arm of their venerable host, who was relating to Mr. Clifton several recent occurrences in the little circle of his rural acquaintance, which he judged would interest and amuse him:

him: when the name of Mrs. Woodville, uttered in a tone of marked surprize, instantly awakened Harriet from her reverie, and she lent an attentive ear to what succeeded it.

“Yes, yes,” said Mr. Everard, “I am
“no stranger to her name nor to her good-
“ness; Charlotte and I have often seen
“her from our terrace, when she little sus-
“pected herself known, dispensing her
“charities among the children of want,
“infirmity, disease, and sorrow, in yonder
“group of cottages. She has, indeed,
“imparted more out of her little mite,
“than the lordly owners of all these sur-
“rounding palaces would spare from their
“abundance. Truly may it be said, she
“has fed the hungry, clothed the naked,

“ shielded the orphan, and taken the stranger in ; but, for all her virtues, I am told she is basely ruined, poor lady.”

“ Ruined !” exclaimed Mrs. Clifton, while the tears of the old woman—the marked dejection that impressed the features of Emilia, when they first beheld her—and the emphatical words of Mr. Woodville—rushed on her remembrance, and all conspired to assure her they had their source in some calamitous event. Yet again she doubted, when their succeeding cheerfulness arose to her mind ; but the well-known delicacy--the unequall’d caution with which Mrs. Woodville had ever strove to conceal her sorrows, and prevent their wounding others, proved more than a counterbalance for every ope ; and her mental discussions

ended

ended in a conviction of her being again o'erwhelmed by some direful misfortune.

“ Most unfortunate—most deserving woman,” said she, “ how does my heart reproach me—for being lulled into a forgetfulness of that anguish of heart that was so evident, when she pressed me to her friendly bosom, and called herself a beggar? Oh! most unfeeling and unpardonable—that I should have impelled her to exertions that, at such a season, must have wrung her heart, instead of claiming a friendly participation of her afflictions, and offering my little all for their alleviation.—But I will fly to her—intreat her confidence—and do all I can to palliate this error; and she will believe and trust me—for dissimulation, she well knows,

"is a stranger to the soul of Harriet
"Clifton."

Mr. Everard gazed intently in her face, as (forgetful of all but Mrs. Woodville) she thus gave utterance to the emotions he had undesignedly excited—while Mr. Clifton clasped her hands between both his, with a glow of tender approbation, and a general silence ensued; until a young female, regarding them from the door of the house, in the attitude of deep attention, caught her eye—and looking at Mr. Clifton, Mr. Everard exclaimed, "Do you not see Charlotte?" Without replying, Mr. Clifton ran forward and caught her in his arms, while a deep suffusion o'erspread her before palid cheek, but was quickly succeeded by its former hue, as she in tremulous accents pronounced her congratulations

tions to Mrs. Clifton, and bade her welcome to Everard Park.

Charlotte Everard was an interesting figure, but without the smallest claim to beauty—pale and emaciated, she approached them with a dejected air—called Mr. Clifton her brother—her best—best friend—and leaning pensively on his arm, they entered the house; where a tall, ruddy, young man, in a hunting dress, with a pack of hounds at his heels, met, and almost overpowered their guests with his heartfelt effusions of surprize and joy. He was the only son of Mr. Everard; and his appearance and demeanour seldom failed to create a prepossession in his favour wherever he went.—He possessed an ingenuous openness and superiority of aspect, joined to a manly and not ungraceful form, and

an

an unaffected warmth of heart, that gained him universal approbation.--He was deemed a general admirer among the neighbouring fair ones—and many a rural beauty boasted a triumph o'er his thoughtless heart, while vanity alone prevented their discerning, that the objects of his preference and pursuit were the hounds in full cry; and he had no idea of any bliss equal to a convivial meeting after a fox chase.—His affections were naturally ardent, and his principles good; he was a dutiful son—a tender brother—and a faithful friend; but a total stranger to every species of modern refinement, except the sublime arts of cricket, trap-ball, back-gammon, &c. in which he was a first-rate adept, may be ranked as such;—add to which, a happy retention of every word in the game act---writing a good plain hand--understanding something
of

of arithmetic--and a *little* of Greek and Latin--and (let me not deprive him of a single honour) singing the most jovial song ---and dancing the best hornpipe of any in the county ; and the attainments of Arthur Everard are numbered.---He looked an expressive plaudit of his friends' choice, as soon as their first salutations had subsided---and embraced an early opportunity to pronounce him a d---d lucky fellow---adding, " I never saw but one fit to stand
" by her side, and she lives with a worthy
" old soul in a snug cot, behind that hill," (pointing toward the dwelling of Mrs. Woodville); " and to be sure, if I must
" speak my mind, she beats all that I ever
" yet fixed my eyes on; not but what
" your wife is rather taller, and fairer--but
" yet, I don't know how it is, one wishes
" to look at the other for ever; but you
" shall

"shall see her at Church, and tell me
"what you think."
I believe I have already seen her—(re-
plied Mr. Clifton, smiling at the eulogium,
which he instantly knew belonged to Emi-
lia), "and forgot her external charms in
"the contemplation of her far superior
"mind, and all-accomplished manners."

"The d—l you have!" exclaimed Ar-
thur; "then I hope you'll lend a helping
"hand, that I may forget them too--for
"they're often a plaguy baulk to me;
"when I go to Church to say my prayers,
"I always find my attention wandering to-
"wards her pew; so if what you say is
"true, I wish to contemplate her mind
"as soon as possible, for I don't like to
"have my devotions so broke in upon."

Mr.

Mr. Clifton laughed aloud at this request—and promising Arthur his utmost aid, enquired for his younger sister, Alicia; adding, “she did not use to be thus remiss; but was ever the first to receive” and bid me welcome.”

“Why, don’t you know, she is gone to London on a visit to our great cousin, Lady Dorothy Railton”! exclaimed Arthur. “She’s been there I don’t know how long: Charlotte was first invited—but she’s got into such a mopeish, pining way lately, that there’s no moving her from home; so she begged to be excused; and my father, fearful of offending Lady Dorothy, by a refusal of her condescension, determined on Alicia’s going in her stead—and the dear little mad-cap was almost frantic with joy at the

“the thoughts of seeing London---and
“sends us accounts of every thing that she
“meets with; but I wish she was home
“again---for we all feel her loss, and I’ve
“never been easy since she’s gone; not but
“Lady Dorothy will take care enough of
“her, I dare say—but London is a danger-
“ous place—and Alicia is very pretty.”

“And very inexperienced,” added Mr.
Clifton; “but with a lady of rank and
“character, there can be no doubt of her
“safety; and that lady her relation.”

“True,” replied Arthur, “her letters
“speak well enough of Lady Dorothy;
“and she is in raptures with the gay life
“she leads, and all the charming amuse-
“ments she partakes in; but I shall soon
“spoil her sport, and persuade my father

“to

"to write for her.—Certainty is the best
"safety I say."

This was a determination Mr. Clifton could not but silently applaud.---Stranger as he was to all but the name of Lady Dorothy Railton, he could not but allow, that a young, beautiful, and unsuspicious female was surely safest under the parental roof.---Charlotte now summoned them to supper; and our travellers, without any reluctance, complied with the hours of separating for the night, that prevailed in this unfashionable circle.

C H A P. IV.

"LET us," said Mrs. Clifton the next morning, as the lark warbled his early salutation at her chamber windows, "Oh! let us hasten to Mrs. Woodville's.—The image of her misfortunes have engrossed my slumbers, and I have seen the sons of cruelty and violence refusing to admit the lovely Emilia and herself within her own ever hospitable dwelling. I am not superstitious, but my mind forbodes some deep distress approaching them."

Mr. Clifton rallied, and used every means to dispel her apprehensions, but in vain;

vain ; they were unconquerable, and disregarding the parade of dress, at a juncture when friendship and humanity seemed to supplicate her aid, she slipped on an easy dishabille and found their friends were still more early matiners. To them Mrs. Clifton imparted her anxious solicitude, and ere breakfast was removed, they set off unattended on their expedition. But ah, what sad revolutions had a few short hours made ? an ill looking man guarded the entrance to their friends abode, and sternly demanding their business, admitted them with the sullen air of an inexorable goaler.

But what could equal their amazement to find this truly noble-minded woman, instead of wasting fruitless complainings on what was irremediable, (but by the exertions of that exemplary fortitude which had

had always supported her under past trials), whispering sweet consolations to the weeping Emilia, and equally disconsolate, faithful Martha! "Doubt not," said she, pressing Emilia tenderly to her bosom, while poor old Martha knelt by her side, and bathed her garments with her tears, "oh! "doubt not, dear child of my heart, but "the Supreme will open an asylum for us "all. He will not separate beings so "closely united: for sure am I, the ties of "consanguinity itself does not exceed the "sacred union of according spirits.

"No, my Emilia! and you, my faithful Martha, believe me, we shall not "part; believe her, who is taught by experience, to trust her cause with Him, "in whom is neither variableness, nor "shadow of changing."

Martha's

Martha's tears flowed with less rapidity as those soothing accents stole on her ear.

"Then," exclaimed Emilia, "I shall still be supremely happy! if near you, what evil can reach me? You'll teach me to deride the stings of poverty, and turn them into blessings—oh! I will play the sweetest airs, and sing, and work, and call forth all my little talents to chace sorrow from your heart. Such a consoling idea has just stolen on my mind, and I will indulge it. Perhaps, my dear, my more than parent! we shall, if possible, be happier than ever."

"Bless you, sweet comforter!" cried Martha, kissing her hand.

Mrs.

Mrs. Woodville lifted her eyes towards Heaven, and beheld Mr. and Mrs. Clifton standing at the parlour door, silently witnessing this most affecting scene. They had stood there some moments unperceived, and unable to utter a word ; every faculty was absorbed in wonder and admiration—until the voice of Mrs. Woodville roused them from their torpid state.

“ We came,” said Mrs. Clifton, looking quietly in her friend’s face, “ to offer comfort and condolance—but I see you need it not.”

“ Forgive me,” added she ; “ I shall one day learn to know you, to judge of you, only by yourself.”

“ Oh

“ Oh Madam !” exclaimed Martha,
“ I *ax* pardon for my boldness ; but I’ll
“ tell you as good a way every bit to judge
“ of Mistrefs, and that is, only by com-
“ paring her with every body else you
“ know---and you’ll find as much odds as
“ can be :---She never wrong’d any soul of
“ a single farthing in all her born days ; to
“ my *fartin* knowledge—”

“ Pray, Martha, no more of this,” interrupted Mrs. Woodville.

“ Nay, Madam,” rejoined the honest creature, “ I hope you will forgive my
“ disobeying you for once ; but stand up
“ for your cause, I must, and will. You,
“ Madam, that never crushed a fly in your
“ whole life, but have always opened your
“ hand to the needy, and been employed

“ in doing all manner of good continually
“ —you, I say, to have a parcel of un-
“ merciful ruffians come and turn you out
“ of house and home, only because you
“ passed your word for a poor man, to save
“ him from perishing in a gaol, and his
“ wife and family from starving; and now
“ because he can't pay just to the time, I
“ say, to come and seize upon you—oh!
“ it's enough to make a judge lose his
“ wits! and with my good-will such hard-
“ hearted rogues should be made an ex-
“ ample of---for I do say it---they are fifty
“ times worse than a highway robber!”

Martha accompanied her speech with the utmost violence of gesture—and had actually worked herself up into such an extreme rage, as Mrs. Woodville found it necessary to exert all her authority to check.

She

She insisted on her never more, in her presence, indulging such unbecoming virulence;—and added a firm assurance, that no provocation could, in her opinion, excuse a conduct so repugnant to her own ideas.

“I would not offend you, Madam,” sobbed out this faithful creature, “no not
“for the whole world; I would rather lose
“my life than offend you; but when one
“sees such—” she could no more—but bursting into tears, quitted the room.

“I would tell you,” said Mrs. Woodville, turning with visible agitation to Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, “all that passes at this
“moment in my heart---then you would
“know how infinitely I feel myself obliged
“by this early visit, this proof of real

“ friendship; for well I know the busy
“ voice of rumour has informed you, that
“ I am about to be deprived even of this
“ last resource---this poor hovel---where I
“ had hopes to end my woe-marked days
“ ---and breathe out my soul in peace;—
“ but now it must not be, and I submit.—
“ Perhaps you wonder at my calmness,
“ and think it apathy; but the first pangs
“ are subsided; this is a threatened blow,
“ but I had no power to ward it off: Yes-
“ terday I felt it's near approach, and
“ determined to conceal my apprehensions
“ from those around me, while it was pos-
“ sible; but the conflict of my mind pro-
“ duced a sudden and alarming effect—I
“ dropped from Emilia's arm yesterday, as
“ we were taking our accustomed morning
“ walk, and remained a considerable time
“ lifeless; animation at length returned,

“ and

“and my wearied spirit sunk again into in-
“sensitivity in the arms of sleep, in which
“state this dear girl had left me, when you
“arrived and found her and that affectionate
“being, I have just sent sorrowing away, im-
“pressed with melancholy—not for my
“misfortunes, but my illness;—for until
“last night, when it could be no longer
“concealed, they were total strangers to
“every circumstance of the calamity in
“which I am now involved:—and surely
“it would have been an ungrateful return
“for ardent affection and faithful attach-
“ment, to overwhelm them with unne-
“cessary anguish, by a sad anticipation of
“what I well know to be unavoidable.

“Armed with this determination, I
“subdued every tumultuous passion, that
“warred against my peace, and resolved to

“ enjoy as much as Heaven would allow ;
“ and, except a few gloomy intervals,
“ really tasted a tranquil, yet animated de-
“ light in your society.—Emilia seemed
“ inspired with unusual vivacity at seeing
“ me so perfectly restored—and I forgot
“ the approaching evil amid the smiling
“ circle.——Would it not likewise,”
added she, addressing Mrs. Clifton, “ have
“ argued a very unperfect sense of the heart-
“ felt joy you evinced at again finding me,
“ to embitter the few hours we spent to-
“ gether---by unavailing complaints?—
“ No, believe me, a conduct like that
“ would, in my estimation, have been
“ wanton cruelty ; and a mind capable of
“ suggesting it, must be a stranger to every
“ refined sensation, every humane, every
“ distinguishing principle.”

Those

Those were truths that could not fail to find an advocate in every feeling and sensible heart; but while they silenced the purposed remonstrances of Mrs. Clifton, they increased her regret—that a being so noble, so truly exalted, should, for so long a series of years, be the mark of adverse fate.

“But is there no way,” said Mrs. Clifton, “to soften, if not avert, this dreadful blow?” “Tell me, tell Mr. Clifton; and, if possible, allow us the unspeakable joy of serving you; deny us not this privilege of friendship.”—Mrs. Woodville smiled gloomily, and shook her head.

“No, generous Harriet!” exclaimed she, “there is no way. I will discharge this claim to the utmost; but never

“ imagine I am base enough to involve
“ others, voluntarily, in the sad effects of
“ my incautious zeal. It is fixed to yield
“ up all but virtue, integrity, and friend-
“ ship; but no benevolent heart shall in-
“ jure itself to relieve me. No---my
“ Emilia and I will find out another calm
“ retreat---and eat the humble bread of
“ labour.---Industry shall prove an inde-
“ pendence---and we will be rich in con-
“ tentment, innocence, and a reciprocal
“ endeavour to render each other happy---
“ superior to the frowns or smiles of for-
“ tune.”

“ Labour!” exclaimed Mrs. Clifton,
“ dearest Madam, how can you labour?”
“ With my head, and with my heart,” re-
turned Mrs. Woodville; “ and this dear
“ child will execute. No longer, there-
“ fore

“fore, regard us as objects of compassion
“---for oh! how enviable is our state to
“that of thousands.”

“Enviably indeed!” cried Mr. Clifton,
who had long been silent---“truly envi-
“able! But think not, worthy Lady, we
“came to oppress you by offers of pecuni-
“ary assistance---alas! we have not the
“power---but there may be other aids.---
“I will represent you as you are,---and
“surely his heart will relent.---I will exert
“all my little skill to obtain---if but a re-
“prieve---until friends can be raised for
“you---nor shall my surety be wanting, if
“needful.”

“But not all your exertions, my good
“Sir,” replied Mrs. Woodville, “can

“ ever procure me one moment’s respite---
“ circumstances complicated and insur-
“ mountable oppose ; and when the present
“ business is arranged, and my spirits more
“ equal to such a recital, I will inform you
“ of every particular : in the mean time,
“ accept my heart-felt acknowledgments,
“ and think me not too proud to be ob-
“ liged.” As she uttered these words, she
arose, adding, with an air of assumed gai-
ety, “ I must leave you for a short time ;
“ but Emilia will summon all her philo-
“ sophy, and all her cheerfulness, to enter-
“ tain you until my return.” Emilia
smiled her obedience---but it was a gloomy
smile---and she was incapable of making
any other reply. Her eyes followed Mrs.
Woodville out of the room, and dropped
their sympathetic effusions of the lively ad-
miration, tender sorrow and gratitude,
which

which the unnumbered virtues and sufferings of that most excellent woman excited in her gentle bosom.

In vain she sought for the philosophy and cheerfulness her friend relied on ; they were gone. She uttered, in an uninterrupted voice and broken accents, a few unintelligible sentences ; but alas ! she was quite unequal to the task assigned her---and the entrance of their loquacious Martha proved a welcome relief.

“ My mistress ! ” said she, “ my poor, “ dear, good mistress, has sent some wal- “ nuts and fruit, and cakes and wine for “ the gentry---and she’ll come as soon as “ the man’s done taking the inventory.” Emilia placed the refreshments on the table, and while the moving simplicity of Martha

sunk deeply on her mind, she importuned Mr. and Mrs. Clifton to participate of them ---but their anxiety for Mrs. Woodville was too lively to be suspended by all the endearing sollicitude of Emilia; and fearing, as their offers of assistance had proved ineffectual, that their presence at such a juncture might rather distress than console, they took a hasty leave, without waiting for Mrs. Woodville's return, promising to repeat their visit soon.

C H A P. V.

NO sooner had Mr. and Mrs. Clifton turned from the abode of their estimable and much-pitied friend, then they beheld Arthur Everard hastening towards them. His countenance was marked by generous anxiety, and he eagerly enquired what was the fate of the amiable cottagers; then, without waiting a reply.

“I see plainly how it is,” said he, “I
“see ’tis too true: the dog spoke plain
“enough to be sure; and yet I was in
“hopes, poor old lady—but can nothing
“be done?” Mr. Clifton shook his head,
Arthur’s

Arthur's eyes flashed fire, and after a pause—
“I tell you,” exclaimed he, “they shan’t
“be turned out, d— me if they shall! I’ll
“stake my life, nay sell my dogs and
“abandon the chace for ever, first! What!
“nothing to be done? It shall go hard
“then. D’ye think I’ll let ’em be turned
“out? No, I’ll fight that ill-looking rogue
“that’s gone to distress them, as long as
“there’s a drop of blood in my veins,
“first!—Yes, yes, let me alone to match
“him.”

With those words he darted from them
with the swiftness of thought.

“Oh madness!” exclaimed Mr. Clif-
ton, “rash young man! where is he gone?
“I am ready to sink with terror! he sure-
“ly will not obtrude himself on their for-
“rows,

“ rows, I fear some sad consequence, oh—
“ let us hasten after him !” Mrs. Clifton
acquiesced. They saw him enter without
opposition, and heard his voice very loud
as they approached the gate. Martha met
them at the door, “ La, Sir,” cried she,
“ here’s a gentleman has frightened my
“ poor Lady and Miss almost out of their
“ wits ; do come and try to pacify them,
“ for he’s going to beat that lawyer man,
“ that’s big enough to crush him to death ;
“ he’s crazy that’s *sartin* fure, to come here
“ and make such a fufs, oh, I’m all of a
“ tremble from head to foot.”

Mrs. Clifton was little less alarmed,
the voices still grew more clamorous, and
following Martha up stairs, they found Ar-
thur and the attorney in warm altercation
on the landing place.

“ I tell

“ I tell you Sir,” exclaimed the latter,
“ the house and all belonging to it is to be
“ sold, and the produce appropriated to
“ discharge a part of the lady’s debt;”
“ And I tell you it shan’t be sold at all;”
returned Arthur, “ or if it is I’ll buy it
“ myself.” “ With all my heart, if you’re
“ the best bidder,” said the other, “ It’s no
“ other business of mine then as I’m ob-
“ liged to act in my profession; I only do
“ my duty.” “ May be so,” cried Ar-
thur, “ or may be you think it fine sport
“ to distress your neighbours.”

The attorney’s complexion glowed with
anger.

“ Ay, it’s all one to me if your face was
“ as red as our turkey cock, I shoud’nt
“ care; but who knows, you are ashamed
“ perhaps

“perhaps of taking up such a dirty job,
“and that makes you blush.” “Blush!”
echoed the attorney—“Ay, how could you
“avoid it? how could you be off blushing
“at the thought of distressing such as her?”
pointing at Mrs. Woodville, who, utterly
astonished at what she heard and saw, stood
leaning on Emilia’s arm deprived of all
power of enquiring into the motive of a
conduct so extraordinary.

“They are entire strangers to me Sir,”
replied the attorney, after a pause. “And
“I never spoke to them in all my life,”
said Arthur---The attorney stared.

“No;”---added he, “though to be sure
“I am a neighbour, I never exchanged
“words with either of them; but what of
“that?---if I had never seen them before
“this

“ this moment, my heart would take their
“ part---yes it would--but however, that’s
“ not all ; I know enough of their charity,
“ and shall she,” pointing again at Mrs.
Woodville, “ who has been a mother and
“ a friend, I dare say, to thousands, want
“ a place to hide her head in? I tell
“ you I’ll *lose* my life first.”

“ Well, young gentleman, but I must
“ not be disturbed thus with your clamour,”
said the attorney warmly.

“ But you shall,” returned Arthur ; “ I
“ will disturb you---I don’t like you, and
“ that’s plain !”

“ But I will not be interrupted in my
“ business, Sir !”---“ Then dispatch, Sir,”
cried Arthur, “ let me know the price of
“ your

“your bargain, and I’m your man.---
“But harkee” added he, going up close to
the attorney, “harkee, Sir, I won’t be
“cheated; I’ll take it at just value—but if
“you attempt to play me false, beware of
“my vengeance---that’s all.

“My name’s Arthur Everard; but
“hold!” taking a pencil out of his pocket,
“there’s my name and place of abode—
“so when you’ve settled your terms, let
“me know;” so saying, he nodded at Mr.
and Mrs. Clifton, and was going, but
turning round again—“Don’t fling me,”
added he, “if you do, I’ll scent you thro’
“all your doublings, and have no more
“mercy upon you, than you have on
“others.”

“But let me ask, ere you leave us,” said
Mrs. Woodville, “what can possibly in-
“duce

“duce you to take so generous an interest
“in my misfortunes?”—“Oh! I don’t
“know, Ma’em---no particular reason---
“only---I don’t like such fellows as that
“always to have things their own way—
“that’s all, Ma’em—so I hope you won’t
“take any thing amiss.”

“Come,” added he, to Mr. and Mrs.
Clifton, “won’t you go? I know dinner
“is waiting, and I’ve talked myself into
“as good an appetite as if I had been hav-
“ing a hunt this morning.”

Mrs. Clifton gave him her hand in
silence, and whistling a tune, he led her
down stairs, while Mr. Clifton followed,
revolving the striking occurrences of this
remarkable scene.

“Now

“Now I’m satisfied,” said Arthur, unbuttoning his waistcoat, and wiping his forehead, as if he had been overheated at a cricket match, “yes, I’m satisfied now; “yonder poor souls, I hope,” pointing to the adjacent cottages, “won’t lose their “kind instructors, their best comforter and “friend; but yet I wish it had been “brought about in a better way. I did “not half like taking so much upon me “before the old Lady’s face; there’s no “knowing how she may take it, but what “could I do? ’Twas too late to stand “upon compliments. If I’d known it as “soon as father did, I’d have taken quite “another course. I’d a purchased it over “the old Lady’s head, and so a sent her “the deeds in the young one’s name, and “then she, nor nobody else, wou’d never “a been a pin the wiser who did it; for

“you know,” added he, turning to Mr. Clifton, “I cou’d have taken the money
“out of grandmother’s thousand pound
“legacy, and so not let father into the
“secret: not but what he’s kind-hearted
“enough, but you know old folks are old
“folks, and he might have been apt to
“fancy there was more in it then I wou’d
“own.”—“Why really,” said Mr. Clif-
ton, archly, “I am rather suspicious of
“that’s being the case.”

“Of what’s being the case,” enquired
Arthur roughly.

“That so very spirited an exertion of
“philanthropy must have derived its
“source from some cause, perhaps, un-
“known even to yourself.”

“Or,

“Or, in plain English,” exclaimed Arthur, “you think me a selfish, narrow-souled villain! incapable of doing a disinterested piece of service to a worthy being. Thank ye, thank ye, for your good opinion;—but I don’t mind it a rush—think so still—I shan’t take the trouble to persuade you out of it—not I—only I desire you won’t drop a word to father; because, if you do, I shan’t be quite so well pleas’d—that’s all—but as to what you, or any body else thinks, I don’t value it a souse.”

“But, perhaps, I may be wrong,” said Mr. Clifton, who had not suspected that his hint would have been so ill received.

“Time will shew,” said Arthur, sullenly.
“Surely!” cried Mrs. Clifton, hurt at seeing

seeing the raillery of her Edward so ill taken—" Surely Mr. Everard cannot
" imagine his friend could ever mean to
" cast a reflection on a conduct deserving
" the highest encomiums. To relieve the
" sorrows of our fellow beings is always
" meritorious; but, when exemplary worth
" suffers, how does it call forth every ge-
" nerous principle, and insure blessings to
" him who nobly stands up the advocate of
" such a cause."

" No, no, Madam," replied Arthur,
" I don't mind what your husband said;
" every body has a right to speak their sen-
" timents, that's my maxim; and, if he
" thinks me a mean, selfish fellow, why
" not say so? I like honesty. I want
" neither praise nor blessings, not I; not-
" withstanding,

“withstanding, I thank you for your civi-
lity, Madam!”

“But this serious resentment wounds
“me to the soul,” said Mr. Clifton: “Do
“I not know your heart! have I not al-
“ways admired your enthusiastic ardor,
“on points of far less moment! How then
“can I fail to approve its exertion in such
“a cause as this?—You have long called
“me by the sacred name of friend; and,
“believe me, true friendship is ever kind,
“indulgent, and ready to put the most
“favourable construction on the words and
“actions of her votaries.”

“Then you did not keep up her rules,
“I think,” replied Arthur, with a half
smile, “when you drop’d that unkind sus-
“picion just now; however, now I am a

E

“little

“ little cooler, I do think ’twas only a jest,
“ occasioned perhaps by what passed last
“ evening; but, it is all nothing, so let’s
“ hear no more on it, but make it up.”
“ I’m rather fiery, Madam, you see,”
added he, to Mrs. Clifton, while he shook
his friend’s hand most cordially.

“ I never enquired,” said Mr. Clifton,
“ how your father came by such early in-
“ telligence of Mrs. Woodville’s misfor-
“ tunes.”

“ Why it seems,” replied Arthur, “ that
“ he had it from the lawyer’s own mouth.
“ Thus it happened, father din’d with our
“ Justice, and the Mayor and Aldermen,
“ at the tavern in our market town, yester-
“ day; and so one of the company happens
“ to meet this lawyer, and knew him, and
“ invited

“invited him to dine with them. Well,
“over the bottle the fellow loosed his
“tongue, and tells what brought him into
“this part of the country; and, finding
“father was a near neighbour of the old
“Lady’s, he asked leave to bear him com-
“pany as far as their road lay together;
“and it seems father was but just got
“home, and had his tea, when you arriv-
“ed; but I happened to be drinking a
“glass in the parlor with Squire Spankum,
“who had just left me when you came in,
“so did not know a word about it till this
“morning after you were gone. I could
“not make out what you were talking
“about at breakfast, but as soon as you
“had left us, Charlotte told me the whole
“story, and as soon as I could make my-
“self decent to be seen, I set off after
“you.”

“ But took care to make yourself very
“ spruce first,” said Mr. Clifton, smiling;
“ that was a circumstance which before
“ escaped me, and is a plain demonstra-
“ tion that you did not forget there was a
“ young, as well as an old Lady in the
“ case.”—

“ No more—not a word more—” cried
Arthur, opening the gate that led into the
lawn, “ only mind what you say before
“ father.”

The old Gentleman met them ere they
had proceeded many steps further, and
enquiring what was the event of their
visit.

“ Only the sad assurance, Sir,” replied
Mrs. Clifton, “ that our friendship can
“ avail

“avail nothing—a refusal of every prof-
“fered service, the explanation of which
“is reserved to some future period. But
“had you witnessed the unexampled forti-
“tude and resignation of those amiable
“sufferers, Sir—”

“Me!” interrupted the old Gentleman,
“No, no—God forbid!—I could not bear
“it. But, what, is the place to be sold?
“Where are they going, have you heard?”

“The house and every thing about it is
“to be disposed of, Sir,” replied Mrs.
Clifton; “but as to their future residence,
“that is, I believe, a point yet unthought
“of.”

“Oh—as to that,” cried Arthur, “I
“am sure enough they’ll never want a
“home.”

“ They shall be welcome to one with
“ me,” said Mr. Everard, “ as long as
“ they please ; and I wish, you Madam,”
addressing Mrs. Clifton, “ would persuade
“ them to come and stay with us, till they
“ can determine on something better.”

“ I will most certainly, employ all the
“ eloquence I am mistress of, to oblige
“ you, my good Sir,” replied Mrs. Clif-
ton, “ and thereby doubly gratify myself.”

Mr. Clifton added his assurance of aiding
her. Arthur’s eyes sparkled with approba-
tion ; he could have hugg’d the good old
man to his heart, but still indulged a pleas-
ing hope of rendering the proffered asylum
unnecessary.

C H A P. VI.

WHILE Mr. Everard compassionated the afflictions of his neighbours, his heart overflowed with gratitude to Heaven, from the mental assurance, that evil was far from his own house; when his son espied the livery of Lady Dorothy approaching them. "Intelligence from our dear Alicia!" he exclaimed, observing a letter in the servant's hand, "how is my beloved sister?" The man bowed, and delivered the letter to Mr. Everard. It was from Lady Dorothy herself, and these were its laconic contents.

"SIR,

"In consequence of a total change in
"your daughter's manners, I send her
"home, under the care of my own ser-
"vants; but if you have any other daugh-
"ter less romantic in her ideas, less vain
"of her person, less conceited of her ima-
"ginary talents, and, in short, less ridicu-
"lous; you may send her back in my car-
"riage, as I do not mean to withdraw my
"favours from your family.

"DOROTHY RAILTON."

"And where is my child?" said Mr.
Everard, giving the letter to his son---the
servant hung his head, but made no reply.
"Where is my poor condemned girl?
"Will she not fly to the arms of her in-
"dulgent father? I am grieved to the
"heart

“heart that she has offended Lady Dorothy
“---sincerely grieved, to hear that she is
“so vain, conceited, and ridiculous; I
“thought her otherwise; but I am a fond
“parent, and perhaps judge amiss; yet let
“not my Alicia think a few youthful errors
“shall ever rob her of my tender affection:
“No, I will hasten to welcome and em-
“brace her, nourish her virtues, and strive
“to correct her faults.”

“This comes of jaunting to London,
“and going out of one’s own sphere!”---
cried Arthur, biting a corner of the letter---
“Great folks and little folks are best
“asunder---they never understand each
“other---and this is all a mistake of Lady
“Dorothy’s, I’m sure it is; for though the
“dear, little, sweet-temper’d, lively, fen-
“sible girl, is beautiful as a cherub, I
“don’t believe she ever gave it a thought

“ in her life, before she went to London ;
“ so if she is ridiculous, we know who to
“ thank for it ; but I don’t take all I hear
“ for granted ;” so returning the letter to
his father, he darted into the house---but
meeting them again at the door, “ she is
“ not come !” he exclaimed—and could—
no more.—His lips trembled---a death-
like paleness drove the native crimson from
his cheek---and he struck his forehead
wildly with his hands.---“ Not come,” re-
peated Mr. Everard, “ Alicia not come !
“ then where is she ?” looking sternly at
the servant.

“ Yes---produce my sister !” exclaimed
Arthur, in a frantic tone, “ Tell me,”
added he, seizing the man by the collar,
“ what hast thou done with her ? what
“ villain art thou in league with to tear
“ her

“her from us, to destroy her? Come,
“be honest---confess---for I read guilt in
“thy looks---reveal the plot---and I will
“call thee my friend and brother. No
“deliberation”---shaking the poor affright-
ed fellow most violently---“no time to
“make falsehoods---speak instantly, and
“truly---or my vengeance shall strike thy
“poor frame into atoms!” “I will, Sir,”
cried the man, gasping for breath, “let me
“go, and indeed I will speak truth; nay;
“I’ll swear to it!”---Arthur instantly re-
leased him.---“Yes, Sir, I’ll take my oath,
“if that will satisfy you, that I know no
“more where your sister is than you do
“yourself!”---“No that won’t satisfy me!
“How dare you attempt to deceive and
“abuse a parent and a brother thus! Pro-
“duce her, I say, or by all---” “Come,
“come, my boy,” said Mr. Everard;

seizing his uplifted arm, "you are too rash
" ---too impetuous; perhaps the poor fel-
" low is not less distressed than ourselves---
" retire, and let me question him coolly."
—"No---pardon me there---I'll not stir
" from this spot at least---till I hear his
" defence, by all that's sacred!" returned
Arthur, "he may be honest to be sure---
" let him be expeditious in what he has to
" say---for I am not now to be trifled
" with."—"No, you sha'nt, Sir," cried
the man, "I'll tell you in a few words—
" The carriage was stopped last evening,
" just at dark, by four stout fellows; we
" took them for robbers, and the young
" Lady in a sad fright offered her purse;
" but they refused it, saying, it was her-
" self they wanted; she instantly fell back
" senseless---my fellow-servant and I re-
" solved not to part with her quietly---
" because

“because she was always such a good
“young Lady, and behaved so well to
“every body---so we knocked one of
“them down, but the rest fired at us, and
“shot Bob, the postillion, through the
“right arm—he instantly fell to the ground
“—another of them disabled me, by strik-
“ing me here across my wrist with a cut-
“lass; they then gagged and tied us both
“to an old tree---two of them got into the
“chariot---one guarded it behind, and
“another jumped upon the box—and drove
“off, leaving us in that terrible condition
“---and we both of us fainted with loss of
“blood---when two farmers going by,
“unbound us, and had us conveyed to the
“next market town, where our wounds
“were dressed---and poor Bob now lies
“very ill.”

Mr.

Mr. Everard clasped his hands in a speechless agony. "Now we know the worst!" cried Arthur-- "And didst thou fight for my sister, good fellow? and art wounded for her? I do believe thee--- and I am an ungrateful dog to use thee as I did just now: But if you will forgive me, you shall live here as one of ourselves, and share my fortune, be it little or much. I am passionate, and I know I have wronged thee, but I abhor myself for it, and I'll make all the amends in my power; I detest ingratitude;---no, the man that lifted up his arm to defend my beloved Alicia, shall not go unrewarded."

"I should be sufficiently rewarded if the young Lady could be found, Sir," replied the man.

"Then

"Then let us not lose another moment;" cried Arthur, "let us fly to the spot where she was torn from thee.— Who knows but from there we may trace the wretches that have got her."

"Hold, Sir!" exclaimed the man, while a sanguine glow mounted into his face, "look here, Sir," pointing to an adjoining eminence, "it is surely our carriage on the top of yonder hill. Yes, that it is; I see the gold and purple stripes as it descends, glittering in the sun-beams; I'll go and meet it;" and away he darted across the lawn. Arthur followed, and soon out-ran him.

Mr. Everard, and his two guests, turned involuntarily after them; saw them ascend the hill and meet the carriage midway.—

way.—The old Gentleman wiped off a stealing tear with the sleeve of his coat, and they walked in silence as far as the gate that opened into the high road; when, proceeding onward, the sound of the carriage very near them, deprived Mr. Everard of all power to go another step, and catching Mr. Clifton by the arm, he sat down on a grassy seat by the road side, nearly lost to every object of sense, when, “My father! My dear, dear father!” uttered in a sweet plaintive voice, awakened him from the stupor that had nearly overpowered him. He looked up, and saw the carriage drive rapidly by them empty. “Oh! then,” cried he, starting from his seat, “she is not there! she is not found! “not found yet—oh my poor brain—how, “how dost thou wander? I fancied the “found of my Alicia’s voice—I foolishly
“thought

"thought her near me."—"She is, she is near you," repeated the same plaintive voice. Mr. Everard started, and following the eyes of Mr. Clifton, beheld no vision, but his beloved child, approaching the spot where he stood, through a small meadow behind them, supported between her brother and another Gentleman, all pale and trembling; and surely, as striking a picture of injured beauty and innocence, as ever fell from the fertile pencil of imagination. Her venerable parent hastened to enfold her in his affectionate arms; but his moving look, animated gesture, and eager step, quite overpowered her just recovered spirits, and she fainted in the arms of her conductor.

"And is it thus, my Alicia, thou art restored to me!" exclaimed the good old man,

man, bedewing her face with his tears :
“ Oh, how are those once sparkling eyes
“ sunk ! the rose driven from thy cheeks,
“ and thy poor hands scratched and bruised !
“ Alas, my child, thou hast indeed been
“ sadly used.”—“ Yes, but be thankful,
“ we have got her again ;” said Arthur, in
a voice almost choaked by his emotions,
as he held her in his arms, and washing her
temples with water from a brook at their
feet, “ thank kind Providence, and thank
“ that Gentleman ; he saved your child ;
“ and she will live to thank him too. She
“ recovers ; see, see, she opens her eyes !”
Mr. Everard gazed in each of their faces
alternately, but could not give utterance
to the various emotions that heaved his
breast.

Those

Those of the parent were most powerful.

“Dost thou revive, my Alicia,” cried he, “again to bless the eyes of thy father, “and be thus welcomed to his beating “heart? Who was it that dared attempt to “tear thee from us?—”

“Dearest Sir,” said Alicia, returning his ardent embrace, and hiding her face in his bosom, “I can only inform you, who “it was that prevented the accomplishment “of that cruel design : and there he “stands,” raising her yet languid eye to the stranger by her side. Again she hid her face, and a torrent of tears relieved her heart from its heavy oppression, while every other eye present was fixed on her deliverer, whose external graces were such,
as

as could not fail to command universal admiration.

His form was drawn by the nicest rules of symmetry, and his face, if possible, was still more faultless. Nothing could exceed the dazzling lustre of his skin—the rich glow on his cheeks—and the blue meanders around his exquisitely formed forehead;—while the radiance of his large, dark blue eyes, his elegant Grecian nose, fine teeth, and a profusion of bright Auburn hair, carelessly turned up behind with a comb, all seemed to vie for precedence with each other, and called to Mrs. Clifton's remembrance, a description she had heard from her father (who spent his early years in camps) of a Tartar youth, whose beauty, even in death, was so remarkable, that the march of a whole victorious army was retarded,

tarded, by the contemplation of such a phenomenon.—In short, if there was an imperfection in the exterior of this charming stranger, paradoxical as it may sound, it was that of being too faultless—and affronting every competitor by an unpardonable display of superiority; for seldom does nature execute so highly finished a model of masculine beauty as Charles Melmoth.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

THE delicate frame of Charlotte Everard was much unequal to sustain the stroke of calamity. The abrupt account of her sister's loss, had thrown her into violent convulsions, and greatly embittered the satisfaction occasioned by Alicia's happy return. The handsome stranger contemplated her situation with much compassion, held her in his arms, and evinced every mark of generous sympathy; while he tenderly warned Alicia to avoid a scene, which, after what she had so lately endured, she could not witness with impunity.—

Mr.

Mr. Clifton acquiesced in the justness of this remark, and, assisted by Arthur, led her to her bed-chamber. Charlotte recovered, and rivetting her ardent eyes on Mr. Melmoth, "Blessed guardian of my
"fleeing spirit" she cried, stretching her arms towards him, "lead my way to
"peace." The voice of her father and Mr. Clifton, at that instant struck her ear, and springing on her feet with a deep sigh, and a look inexpressibly mournful, she crossed her hands on her breast, saying, "then I am still in misery." "Recollect
"yourself, my Charlotte," said Mr. Everard, "you are happy with your parent,
"and your friends that love you;" she looked steadfastly at him, and a kind of sorrowful smile crossed her face; she then leant her forehead on her hand, in a musing attitude: "Your sister too," added Mr.
Everard

Everard—"Oh, that's it!" exclaimed she wildly, "my dear, dear sister is destroyed too! Oh, how could I forget it—my "Alicia, thou too art lost like me." She burst into an agony of weeping, Mr. Clifton attempted to sooth and undeceive her, she pushed him disdainfully from her, and ran out of the room. Arthur, Alicia, and Mr. Clifton, met her on the stairs, she screamed, then threw herself into the arms of her sister, and uttered a variety of inconsistencies; her altered form and incoherent effusions, totally deprived Alicia of all that composure, produced by the efforts of her brother and Mr. Clifton, and they returned to her chamber together.

The affecting incoherencies of Charlotte increased, even to a degree of detirium; one moment she wept, called herself Parricide,

cide, and muttered unintelligible sentences of her father! of sorrow! distraction! guilt! then started up and demanded what was become of Alicia? until her spirits, weighed down by such violent conflicts, refused their exertions, and she sunk into a deep sleep, in her sisters arms, whose mind, equally exhausted, sought the same salutary refreshment; and while Mrs. Clifton watched their couch, Arthur communicated the welcome tidings to his father and friends: Again he lavished his honest effusions of gratitude on Mr. Melmoth: "Alicia will live to bless you," said he, "and we'll all serve you with our lives." Mr. Melmoth bowed gracefully and assured him he was already abundantly recompenced in being enabled to preserve an amiable young lady, and worthy family, from threatening danger. "For," added

F

he,

he, " I was, previous to this event, no
" stranger to the merits of Miss Alicia
" Everard."

" What, then, I suppose you knew her in
" London?" cried Arthur.

" I did, Sir;" replied the stranger, " I
" am honoured with the acquaintance of
" Lady Dorothy Railton, and by my fre-
" quent visits there, gained some know-
" ledge of your amiable sister."

" I am glad of that!" exclaimed Arthur,
" because as that is the case, I dare say you
" can tell me if Alicia is vain, and conceit-
" ed, and ridiculous: Don't be afraid of
" speaking the truth, Sir," observing their
guest look amazed, " for I can't bear to
" be

“be kept in the dark; I always like to
“know the worst of every thing.”

“Then, Sir,” replied the stranger with a
look of embarrassment, “if your sister had
“ever the smallest tincture of the quali-
“ties you mention, it was never discern-
“able to me.”

“Oh! then I am easy,” returned Arthur,
“its only a whim of her Ladyship’s, I sup-
“pose.”

Mr. Everard gave him a look of disap-
probation, and the subject dropped.

“But pray, Sir,” rejoined he, as he
reached a bottle of *Chan paigne* from an
adjoining cupboard, “do tell us all about
“how you happened to meet with Alicia,

“just in the nick of time so—and how you
“managed to get her away from the four
“ruffians that way-laid her; I want to
“know all about it; so here’s to your
“health in a bumper, Sir, and I hope you
“will excuse my curiosity.”

“It is too just and natural to require
“any apology,” replied Mr. Melmoth,
accepting the sparkling glass, that Arthur
held towards him.

“It was,” continued he, “on returning
“to town, from an excursion that business
“obliged me to make to a neighbouring
“shire, that I was so fortunately led to
“the assistance of Miss Everard. She was,
“in truth, the means of hastening my re-
“turn; for being both invited to a ball,
“that was to be given a few days hence,
“in

“ in honor of the Earl of Villamont, Lady
“ Dorothy’s brother’s birth-day, Miss
“ Everard kindly promised to be my part-
“ ner in the dance, and I could not per-
“ suade myself to relinquish so distinguish-
“ ed a favor;—when, judge of my sur-
“ prize—on stopping at the door of a
“ small inn, or rather alehouse, in an un-
“ frequented part of the country, the re-
“ peated shrieks of female distress made me
“ direct my eyes from whence the sound
“ came—and I beheld at one of the win-
“ dows Miss Everard, struggling between
“ two ill-looking fellows. She saw me:
“ and, springing from my horse, I demand-
“ ed instant admittance to her; but the
“ people of the house refused, assuring me
“ it was a Lady that had eloped from her
“ friends, and her father’s servants had
“ overtaken, and were conveying her home.

“ This convinced me villany was in the
“ case. I laboured to undeceive these
“ abused, but honest rustics, and I was
“ successful;—they all espoused my cause
“ —conducted me to her, listened to her
“ artless tale, and believed it;—but one
“ material circumstance escaped us all;—
“ the wretches, in whose power she was,
“ seeing their schemes baffled, had taken
“ a wise advantage of our attention to the
“ sweet sufferer, and fled from the punish-
“ ment that otherwise would have awaited
“ them.—This event considerably lessened
“ the satisfaction I felt in effecting her res-
“ cue, as I hoped, by consigning them to
“ the hands of justice, the author of this
“ infamous plot might have been disco-
“ vered.”

“ Why,

“Why, yes,” said Arthur, “I can’t say
“but I should like to have had a battle
“with him; some cowardly scoundrel, I
“dare say;—but no matter, our poor girl
“is safe, so let him live and repent,” (turn-
ing to Mr. Clifton) “with that dirty fel-
“low we left at the old Lady’s.”

Dinner now entered; and Mrs. Clifton was prevailed on to join them, while a servant supplied her place by the bed-side of Charlotte and Alicia; but she resumed her station the instant their repast was over, and while she watched, with generous solicitude, o’er the sleeping sisters, Mrs. Woodville and Emilia claimed a share in her reflections, and she sat musing on the revolutions that a few short hours had introduced in this little community; when the door of the room opened softly, and Mr. Eve-

rard approaching her with cautious steps, "You are kind," said he, imprinting a grateful kiss on Mrs. Clifton's hand, while a starting tear shone in his eye, "you are very kind."—He turned to the bed, and undrawing the curtain, "They are both in a sweet slumber," added he, in a lower key; "O! may the prayers and blessings of a parent render it a powerful restorative!—May my Charlotte and my Alicia be ever blessed!"—He kissed each of their foreheads, and closing the curtain as he found it, seated himself by Mrs. Clifton's side, and, after a pause—

"I have left my son," said he, "welcoming his friends, and drowning every care in wine, while I claimed the privilege of age, and retired, under a pretence of enjoying my accustomed afternoon's

“ noon’s nap; but in reality to consult with
“ you about our neighbours, whom you
“ visited this morning. You promised,
“ Madam, to try and prevail on them to
“ come and stay with us for the present,
“ and I think it cannot be done too soon.
“ What think you of going now?—you can
“ have Lady Dorothy’s chariot, and I will
“ sit here until your return; we must not
“ suffer our own cares to drown the re-
“ membrance of others.”

Mrs. Clifton acquiesced with pleasure in this proposal. Mrs. Woodville and Emilia were strolling down the avenue, arm in arm, when the splendored carriage attracted their notice, and observing its course directed towards them, they quickened their pace, and just reached the gate as it stopped. Mrs. Clifton looked out at the window and nodded. Mrs. Woodville opened the gate, and

surveyed the glittering chariot with an air of enquiry. "It is for you," said Mrs. Clifton, smiling as she alighted, "some propitious power has sent it, to convey you to a circle of expectant friends; and I am commissioned to be your conductress."—"For me!" exclaimed Mrs. Woodville, "Heavens! it is the Villamont arms!" "Oh, my much lamented, injured friend," added she, turning from it with great emotion, "how does it recall thy loved idea to my mind?" She leaned on the arm of Emilia, and looking pensively on Mrs. Clifton's face, begged her to explain this mystery. The adventure of Alicia Everard was related, and the gracious letter from Lady Dorothy, was not forgotten. Mrs. Woodville was no stranger to the dawning merits of that Lady, and wondered not at her style of address to Mr. Everard; for what

what can be hoped from the maturity of those who are nurtured in the very bosom of error; taught, by example, to substitute arrogance of manners for dignity of mind; early initiated in all the winding mazes of folly and excess, and encouraged to sacrifice those amiable characteristics, which should distinguish an exalted female, to misapplied emulation, ill-grounded pride, unfeeling levity, and odious affectation?—These Mrs. Woodville knew were the early traits of Lady Dorothy Railton; in her opinion, therefore, Alicia Everard stood clearly acquitted. “Perhaps,” said she, when Mrs. Clifton had ended her relation, “Alicia has appeared, in some discerning eye, more entitled to admiration than her protectress;—a crime which, with a character such as I picture Lady Dorothy, admits of no aggravation, and

“excludes all hope of pardon.” Mrs. Clifton repeated the motive of her visit, and Mrs. Woodville and Emilia complied with her intreaty. “I have long wished,” said the former, “to know this worthy Everard—I now feel much interested about his daughters, and not a little flattered by the heroism of his son, whose conduct of this morning, although at first it greatly surprized and alarmed me, could not fail to impress all who witnessed it, with the excellence of his heart, which must be glowing with goodwill toward his fellow mortals: and I wish to convince him how much I feel myself obliged, and how warmly I approve the generosity of his nature.” With these words she quitted the room, to give some necessary instructions to Martha, and returning in a few moments, they accompanied Mrs. Clifton to the waiting carriage,

riage, and were soon conveyed to Everard Park. Arthur and Mr. Clifton were walking across the lawn with the stranger, when the chariot stopp'd at the gate. Mrs. Clifton looked out, and waved her hand to them; Arthur caught a glimpse of Emilia's profile, and flew to receive them, while his companions followed slowly after; and when Emilia was presented to the handsome stranger, an approving blush heightened the native glow of his complexion. Her figure, and the expression of her features, were at that moment peculiarly engaging; a soft emotion stole across Mr. Melmoth's mind, as he attentively regarded her; she seemed to claim an interest in his heart, and it was not without reluctance he withdrew his eyes from an object, to him the most pleasing they had ever before contemplated.

C H A P. VIII.

AS soon as they reached the house, Mrs. Clifton hastened to the chamber where she had left Mr. Everard, watching the slumbers of his daughters. Alicia was risen, and, seated on the bed-side, was mingling her tears with those of her sister, who seemed perfectly restored to serenity; and after thus relieving the deep oppression that had weighed down her heart, she kissed the sustaining hand of her anxious father, and tenderly assured him she was quite recovered. Mr. Everard fondly pressed her to his bosom; and when their first emotions had subsided, he enquired of Mrs. Clifton,
if

if her friends were below; and after thanking her for the satisfaction he assured himself of finding in their society, he begged her to remain with his beloved girls, while he went to pour out the warm effusions of his heart, and declare to his respected and amiable visitors, the happiness their presence conferred. Mrs. Woodville and Emilia were deeply affected by his expressions of sincere good-will; tears of joy started into Arthur's eyes, and all present evinced marks of sympathy. It was a scene which no heart, awake to the call of sensibility, could behold unmoved. The handsome stranger felt all its force, and his emotions became infinitely more visible, when Charlotte and Alicia joined them at tea, accompanied by Mrs. Clifton. The mild dejection of Charlotte was inexpressibly affect-

affecting, and the tender solicitude of Alicia placed her character in the most amiable light. Her extreme attention to her sister entirely absorbed the remembrance of what she had so lately suffered herself, and she replied to the enquiries of Mr. Melmoth, with a look of lively gratitude, and turning her sweet down-cast eyes on the pallid face of her sister, she cheerfully assured him, that the restoration of her dear Charlotte was a cure for all she had endured. Mr. Everard then presented them to Mrs. Woodville and Emilia. Often had they admired the modest graces of these amiable girls, but they now regarded them with affection, and friendship took deep and reciprocal root in their breasts. Their society dissipated, in a great measure, the traces of melancholy which
o'erspread

o'erspread the person of Charlotte on her first entrance, and every recent misfortune seemed mutually forgotten. The uncommon vivacity with which Nature had endowed Mr. Melmoth now evinced itself. He related a variety of amusing and interesting anecdotes. The agreeable gaiety of his temper was rendered valuable by the amiable qualities of his heart, and seldom failed to ensure admiration and esteem whenever he appeared. Mrs. Woodville traced his character with evident delight and approbation; and when, after tea, she strolled around the lawn, the testimony of Alicia confirmed the favourable opinion she had conceived of him; and the uncommon narrative of his early vicissitudes claimed a still more lively interest in her benevolent heart. Snatched a poor unfriended

friended infant, from threatening misery, he was fostered beneath the hospitable roof of a gentleman much more exalted by his virtues than his rank, where his amiable and engaging manners rendered him the darling of the whole family; for callous indeed must that heart be that could refuse its approbation to Charles Melmoth. He studied to please, and therefore did please universally. In his bosom, pride found no resting place. Humility of heart, gentleness of temper, and unceasing cheerfulness, were his characteristics. His maturity was soon distinguished by the admiration of the female world. He was ever on the wing to oblige all around him—never evinced any conscious superiority on account of the external advantages he possessed above his companions—was always good-humoured
and

and entertaining, and sought after, to sweeten life, and make even the wretched forget their cares. His mind was too thoughtless to taste the force of sorrow, yet he was not divested of sensibility; but if any pain of heart intruded, it was soon dispelled by its excessive levity. In short, he seemed formed to enjoy as much of happiness as mortality can taste, and dispense it wherever he came. Our party experienced the happy effects of this talent, and time glided imperceptibly by, until the approach of night warned Mrs. Woodville and Emilia to retire. Mr. Everard earnestly pressed their stay with them for the night, but necessary business forbade their acquiescence; and bidding their friends a reluctant adieu, Lady Dorothy's chariot was ordered to carry them home, and Mrs.

Woodville

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Woodville

Woodville promised they would repeat their visit the following day, as soon as she had settled the affairs that reflection presented to her mind, with every aggravating circumstance.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

THE scene they had just quitted was an ample field for conversation to Mrs. Woodville and Emilia, during their ride home. They spoke of the virtues of the hospitable Everard, the engaging simplicity of his daughters, and the generous enthusiasm of his son, with a warmth of approbation to which they were justly entitled: nor, did the friendly exertions of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, or the graces of the accomplished Melmoth, pass unnoticed. The clock of a neighbouring church, struck ten as the chariot stopped at the entrance of
their

their late happy dwelling. The moon was rising her broad unclouded face, from behind an adjacent hill, and nought disturbed the solemn stillness of the scene, but the melancholy plaint of a wood-dove, and the murmur of a distant fountain. All nature seemed to woo the thinking soul to contemplation. Mrs. Woodville, and Emilia, felt its power, and descending from the chariot, they walked arm in arm up the avenue, buried in thought; and Martha who had met them at the gate, followed in silence. This faithful creature had been more than usually assiduous to provide for them at this juncture a supper agreeable to their taste. The table was decked with peculiar care, and every thing waited their return: but scarcely had they expressed their approbation of Martha's exertions, and were seated at their repast, when they

were

were alarmed by a violent ringing at the gate. Martha trembled, lest any new evil was approaching them. They all hastened down the avenue together, and their surprise was rather increased on beholding the attorney, at that late hour. Martha eagerly enquired his business. "I come," said he, alighting from his horse, "with good news for your mistress." Martha unlocked the gate, and Mrs. Woodville and Emilia, changed colour. "What I have to communicate, Madam," said the attorney, addressing Mrs. Woodville as he entered, "is, that I have no longer any business with you. Your debt is discharged, and here," putting a paper into her hand, "is ample proof of what I tell you."

"And

“And who,” said Mrs. Woodville, in tremulous accents, “has done this!” “A gentleman,” replied the attorney, “young, and no doubt noble; I know no more.”

“Gracious Heaven!” exclaimed Mrs. Woodville, clasping the hand of the trembling Emilia. Martha, fell on her knees, and sobbed aloud, from excessive joy; then springing on her feet, she lavished the most extravagant praises on the attorney, and in compliance with Mrs. Woodville’s earnest importunity, he accompanied them into the house, and while he partook of their supper, related all that he knew of this very extraordinary affair.

On returning to the inn, at which he put up, he was shewn into a room where sat a gentleman,

gentleman, who seemed just come off a long journey, and extremely fatigued; but after taking a little refreshment, enquired how many miles it was from thence, to the village near which Mrs. Woodville's solitude stood. The attorney gave him the desired information, saying that he was just come from its neighbourhood.—The stranger then enquired if he knew any families there, to which the attorney replied in the negative, adding it was a disagreeable piece of business that had brought him into that part of the world, and he knew no other than the person concerned, mentioning the name of Mrs. Woodville.—The stranger started! and begged to know what the disagreeable business was, in which that lady was interested. His request was complied with! His agitation was extreme; and, after a few minutes silence, he desired

G

to

to be informed what was the demand against her; then summoning the master of the house, and a gentleman of respectable character, the first magistrate of the town, as witnesses, he discharged the debt; but refused to reveal his name, and earnestly begged that the particulars of this transaction might remain a secret. But actions like that will always find a tongue. The magistrate warmly applauded a conduct so extraordinary, and earnestly invited the generous stranger to his house; but he politely declined his invitation, saying, he was under the necessity of immediately proceeding on his journey; and ordering his horses, he left them full of conjecture and astonishment.

The belief that had at first impressed Mrs. Woodville's mind, on receiving these
surprizing

surprising tidings, vanished as the attorney related the above facts. The image of Arthur Everard, gave place to that of Emilia's generous deliverer, and the sentiments of her young friend were in unison with her own. The hour of midnight warned the attorney to think of returning to the town, and he arose to depart, addressing numerous apologies to his kind entertainers, and wishing them all possible happiness; but Mrs. Woodville would not hear of his leaving them at such an hour. After some intreaty he was prevailed on to accept such accommodation, for the night, as her humble cot afforded, and they parted early the next morning, with reciprocal cordiality.

The hours that intervened, between the departure of their guest and morning, were

spent, by Mrs Woodville and Emilia, in various reflections on the circumstances attending his visit:—again they united in opinion, that their benefactor could be no other than the amiable Fitzhorton; but while their hearts expanded with an increase of gratitude towards him, the happiness he had imparted was considerably allayed, by the assurance that it had for the present deprived them of his much wished for society: a loss to which they could not easily be reconciled, although this delay increased the value of the obligation in their eyes, and was attributed to that delicacy, which is ever the mark of an exalted mind, superior to the capricious smiles of the multitude, and resting secure in the approbation of Heaven and itself.

C H A P. X.

FULLY assured of the sincerity with which their friends at Everard-Park would participate in her good-fortune, Mrs. Woodville proposed a walk there, as soon as they had finished discussing, over the breakfast table, the adventures of the preceding night, and Emilia most chearfully acquiesced; ever zealous of extending happiness to her utmost power, and communicating to others the grateful, and lively pleasure, that animated her own heart. During their walk, the beauties which nature had scattered with a liberal

hand around them, received new charms from the restored serenity of their minds; so true is it, that every object we behold is influenced, in a great degree, by the disposition that prevails in our breasts.

Their early visit occasioned some surprise at Everard Park, but it was succeeded by the most lively joy, when Mrs. Woodville explained the cause of it.—They almost overwhelmed Emilia and herself with their congratulations, at seeing them thus happily reinstated in peace, and independance. Arthur was half frantic with delight, he pressed Mrs. Woodville's hand, kissed Emilia's; blessed the generous instrument of their restored felicity, and wished it had been him.

Mr.

Mr. Everard earnestly pressed his amiable visitors to conclude the day with them; but Mrs. Woodville, with some difficulty, prevailed on him to dispense with their acquiescence with his friendly importunity, at that juncture, as her house required much arrangement, after the hostilities that had been so lately practiced in it:—she was likewise desirous of devoting some time to solitude, and never felt a stronger wish to indulge the emotions of her heart, withdrawn from human observation. Mr. Everard, therefore, forebore to press what was evidently repugnant to her inclination, and she took an affectionate leave, after obtaining a promise from him to accompany his family party, the following day, to her habitation, and enjoy the blessings of innocent festivity and social joy.

Arthur and Mr. Melmoth attended them home; the bosom of the former expanded with the most lively pleasure; he listened with delight to the grateful and exalted sentiments of Mrs. Woodville, while his expressive eyes sufficiently evinced his increasing admiration of Emilia, whose lovely form and features received irresistible beauties from the felicity that dwelt in her breast. Mr. Melmoth, likewise, sincerely participated in the happy turn of their affairs, and while his heart paid Mrs. Woodville its sincerest tributes of respect and esteem, Emilia claimed a tenderer sentiment, and every moment he continued with her seemed to endear her to him more sensibly, and inspired him with a tranquil, yet warm and animated interest in whatever concerned her, which could not escape the penetration of Mrs. Woodville,

ville, and surprized her the more, as it was evidently much nearer allied to the generous emotions of friendship, than the impetuous ardors of love: a passion, whose excess Mrs. Woodville believed would never invade the playful serenity of Charles Melmoth. But, while this assurance stole across her mind, she could not suppress a sigh, as she reflected on the very different nature of Arthur Everard.

As they entered the house, Mrs. Woodville resumed the subject next her heart, for the first time, in the presence of Mr. Melmoth; mentioned the name of Alleyne Fitzhorton as her supposed deliverer, and described, in glowing colours, his preservation of Emilia.

“Fitzhorton!” exclaimed Mr. Melmoth, “Alleyne Fitzhorton! the friend
“of my soul! the son of my revered
“benefactor! and surely, the most amiable
“and accomplished of mankind! Yes,”
he added, after a pause, addressing Mrs.
Woodville, “your conjecture is undoubt-
“edly just, Madam, for about this time
“was my friend expected home, to marry
“Lady Dorothy Railton, and ere now, I
“suppose, he is acquainted with his fa-
“ther’s motive for obtaining his recall from
“the Court of Denmark, where he must
“have been going with dispatches from
“Government, when you last saw him, but
“was at that time ignorant of the attach-
“ment of Lady Dorothy Railton.” “And
“do you suppose he will marry her?” ex-
claimed Mrs. Woodville. “Indeed, Ma-
“dam, my opinion on that subject is di-
“vided..

“ vided. I am sensible that Lady Dorothy
“ is not a woman likely to make him
“ happy ; but, a passion for nobility is the
“ only foible I could ever discover in his
“ worthy father, and filial obedience is one
“ of the striking features in the character
“ of my amiable friend.” The trampling
of horses approached them, as Mr. Mel-
moth pronounced these words. Emilia
looked round, turned pale, and involunta-
rily caught hold of Arthur Everard’s arm,
and Melmoth exclaimed, “ It is my friend,
“ happily arrived to answer for himself !”
Fitzhorton sprang from his horse ; Mel-
moth flew to receive him. He started at
this unexpected rencontre ; but forgetting
every thing else, in the pleasure of again
beholding his fair friends, he pressed them
alternately to his beating heart, and tears
of grateful sensibility bedewed the cheeks

of Emilia. His eyes sparkled as he contemplated those precious tributes—and again clasping her in his arms, he ventured to kiss them away. Mrs. Woodville then introduced him to Arthur Everard, and the presence of Melmoth was soon accounted for. Several hours glided swiftly by. Mrs. Woodville related the events that had lately befallen her; but when she came to that part of her narration, in which she believed Fitzhorton most interested, her voice faltered, and she felt herself unable to proceed.—A deep glow overspread Fitzhorton's countenance. Emilia opened her lips to take up the unfinished tale, but closed them again without attempting it, and a general silence of some minutes ensued; when Melmoth, to dispel their embarrassment, introduced the subject of Lady Dorothy Railton. His friend started at
the

the name, and the glowing crimson instantly gave place to a deadly paleness.—He leaned his head on his hands, and rivetted his eyes on the floor; then suddenly raising them, he exclaimed, in an impassioned voice, “ Oh, Charles! my father
“ renounces me, because I will not unite
“ my fate with a woman I despise!—Yes,
“ my revered, my respectable parent—in
“ the rage of blind ambition, abandons
“ me for ever, because I will not be a villain—
“ and solemnly vow love and fidelity,
“ where I can only feel pity and con-
“ tempt!”

Melmoth stood amazed, but unwilling to enlarge on the subject, he forbore to reply; and Arthur reminding him that they had already exceeded their purposed stay, they took their leave of the Ladies; and Fitz-
horton,

horton, under a pretence of communicating something to his friend, accompanied them part of the way to Everard Park ;—but, in reality, only to conceal as much as possible the agony that wrung his heart, and prevent the emotions it occasioned, from giving pain to the exquisite sensibility of Mrs. Woodville and Emilia.

The tear of deep distress forced its way o'er Fitzhorton's pallid cheek, as they quitted the house. He wiped it away, then looked back at Emilia, who stood at the parlor window ; another, and another succeeded, and leaning on Melmoth's arm, he hid his face with a handkerchief, and endeavoured to conceal the perturbation of his mind. Melmoth participated in his sorrow, and the soul of Arthur Everard, ever awake to the claims of suffering worth,

was

was deeply penetrated. They proceeded on in silence, until they reached the extremity of the grove, in whose bosom Mrs. Woodville's habitation stood; then bidding them adieu, Fitzhorton measured his steps in pensive sadness back to the house. But observing, on his entrance, the mournful air that was diffused over the features of Mrs. Woodville and Emilia, his heart accused him as the cause of disturbing their just restored serenity; and he summoned his utmost philosophy to conceal the agitation of his mind. But all his efforts were ineffectual. He was a novice in the art of dissembling—and they beheld, with deep regret, the poignant anguish that existed under the air of gaiety, which he endeavoured to assume. Delicacy prevented each of them from enlarging on the subject of their recent adventures. Fitzhorton

ton carefully avoided all mention of the sudden revolutions in Mrs. Woodville's affairs; and she as scrupulously forbore any inquiries relative to Lady Dorothy Railton; greatly as was her curiosity excited, by what he had said to Charles Melmoth. The lovely Emilia, spite of the disquietude that wrung her heart, endeavoured by every exertion in her power to dissipate the embarrassment that hovered around them, but by so doing, she only increased their distress. She sung a sweetly plaintive air—Fitzhorton started from his seat, crossed his hands on his breast, and vainly strove to stifle the sighs which laboured in his heart. Mrs. Woodville then requested her to touch the harpsichord. She complied. The emotions of Fitzhorton became still more visible, her own were nearly equal to them, her heart beat, her
cheek.

cheek glowed, she was out in the tune, and when Martha entered with supper, she arose, and her eyes swam in tears, as they met those of Mrs. Woodville. It was a sad and silent meal, and Mrs. Woodville hastened the time of retiring for the night, well assured that it would afford them a welcome and necessary relief. She likewise kindly forbore any apparent observation of Emilia's evident anxiety, but imprinting on her glowing cheek an affectionate testimony of her tender regard, she invoked the blessing of Heaven on her head, and wished her peaceful slumbers. A grateful effusion trembled on Emilia's lips, she was unable to give it utterance, but pressing Mrs. Woodville's hand to her bosom, she hastened to her chamber, and throwing herself into a chair, a torrent of tears burst from her oppressed heart. The
image

image of her generous preserver, rendered more than ever interesting by his present distresses, engrossed her whole soul. His shining graces, his exalted virtues, his pure and animated friendship, all presented themselves to her view.

The late scene dwelt strongly on her mind, and the return of morning found her dressed and seated by the bedside, insensible to every object but that which had employed her meditations.

The sound of Mrs. Woodville's voice on the stairs, awakened Emilia from her reverie: and assured that the manner in which she had spent the night would alarm that lady, she slipped on her night gown, and seating herself at her toilette, began to adjust her hair. Mrs. Woodville entered,
and

and, after her usual enquiries, observed the altered looks of Emilia, expressed her uneasiness at it, and enquired the cause.— A stranger to every species of dissimulation, Emilia was incapable of making a reply; but after a pause she summoned all her resolution, and, blushing, owned the truth; then hiding her face in Mrs. Woodville's bosom, wept and besought her to pardon the weakness she found it impossible to conquer. “My Emilia, my daughter, my friend,” cried Mrs Woodville, extremely moved by her distress, “be composed, I am no stranger to what you wish to conceal: and although the discovery grieves my heart, it cannot excite my displeasure. Severity finds no asylum in the bosom of friendship. I will use every means to alleviate whatever wounds your peace, and while I endeavour

“endeavour to extract the arrow that rankles in your heart, I shall call to remembrance the times that are past, and judge of your sufferings by what have been my own.” Emilia looked an expressive acknowledgement of this kind indulgence, and her benefactress left her to the soothing whispers of calm reflection.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

AS Emilia opened the door of her apartment, Fitzhorton was descending the stairs in a thoughtful attitude, but turning round on hearing her foot-step, he fixed his eyes on her face, and tenderly enquired if she was not well? A violent head-ach, (which want of rest had really given her) accounted for her altered looks, and Mrs. Woodville joined them, as they entered the parlour. Religion had taught this excellent woman to look beyond this transitory scene in search of happiness, and opened to her mind, such unclouded prospects

pects of future bliss, as taught her to deride the short-lived sorrows of mortality, and communicated an habitual cheerfulness, which no misfortune could subdue; but which seldom failed to diffuse felicity around her, and often inspired the soul, weighed down by calamity, with fortitude, and resignation. It was this happy disposition, added to some affectionate and salutary council, that imperceptibly softened the exquisite misery which agonized the bosom of Alleyne Fitzhorton. He poured out the emotions of his soul before her, and frankly owned, that the breach with his father arose, not more from his aversion to Lady Dorothy Railton, than from his deep and unconquerable attachment to another lady.

Here

Here he paused, and was going to proceed, when the tea-pot fell from Emilia's hand, and scalded his foot: Emilia screamed; a favourite spaniel of Fitzhorton's shared his master's fate, and ran crying away. "Oh, what have I done!" cried Emilia, clasping her hands with a look of extreme distress. "Nothing of any consequence, my charming girl," said Fitzhorton, more alarmed for her, than himself: "Believe me! I do not feel any pain—indeed I am not hurt." Emilia declared that was impossible, and addressed herself to Mrs. Woodville, who agreed in her opinion, and requested he would have something applied to his foot. But he again declared, it was too trifling to require any such attention, and ardently besought them to forget it; but Mrs. Woodville insisted, Emilia importuned him with tears,

tears, and he at length yielded a reluctant compliance with their intreaties. The scald was much worse than he had imagined, but the pain it occasioned him, when the skin drew off with his stocking, was abundantly recompenced by the innumerable proofs of tender distress, which involuntarily escaped the artless Emilia.—She knelt by his side, and prepared the dressings which Mrs. Woodville applied, while the lovely girl, unobserved but by the grateful object of her anxiety, wiped of the tears that stole silently over her face. “Darlo, too!—poor Darlo!” she exclaimed, and darting out of the parlour, returned in a few moments with him in her arms. But the injury Darlo had sustained was really as trivial as his master would have had his supposed to be; and Emilia, after loading him with carresses, gave him
a plentiful

a plentiful breakfast, and recommended him to the care of Martha, who softly whispered in her ear: "Ay, ay, Miss, remember the old saying, Love me, love my dog." Emilia could not avoid smiling at the arch simplicity with which Martha uttered these words; but she blushed at the meaning they conveyed, as her eyes met those of Fitzhorton.

C H A P. XII.

FITZHORTON resumed the subject of his father's displeasure. "Yes, Madam," said he to Mrs. Woodville, "had not my heart acknowledged a deep and unalterable attachment—an attachment tender and permanent; because excited by a combination of every perfection which can adorn the female character, perhaps I should have been less determinately averse to the purposed alliance with Lady Dorothy Railton. Parental authority might have surmounted the reluctance of an unconquered heart; but time, misfortune, sorrow, nor ought, but death itself, can
" ever

“ can ever vanquish the passion that rages
“ in my breast;—a passion, alas ! as hope-
“ less, as it is involuntary. Long, long,
“ have I struggled with the silently devour-
“ ing flame, but still it reigns triumphant—
“ and life cannot support the cruel conflict.
“ My existence is a burthen. I wander o’er
“ the face of the universe, wretched and
“ forlorn. Nature contains but one object
“ that can render me happy—and that ob-
“ ject I look up to as the fallen angels send
“ their wishes back to these blissful seats
“ from which their folly has for ever ex-
“ pelled them---full of despair!”——He
was too much agitated to add more---and
after an interval of silence---“ I hope,”
said Mrs. Woodville, “ my friend has not
“ been guilty of any thing to forfeit the
“ esteem of the woman he loves.” “ Never,”
he replied with emotion, “ never, de-

“signedly---nor, I believe, at all. On the
“contrary, I have reason to hope, that she
“feels for me a very animated friendship.”
---“Then why thus wretched?” enquired
Mrs. Woodville.---“Because, Madam,”
said he, “were I even assured that the lovely
“object of my fond regard returned my
“love, it could not alleviate the pangs I
“endure---” Emilia arose and quitted the
room---“No,” he added, “I think it
“would increase them. I should then
“have the dreadful addition of knowing
“her as wretched as myself; for although I
“have refused to comply with my father’s
“will, I dare not, I never will marry in
“direct opposition to it.” Mrs. Wood-
ville applauded this determination, and
added whatever she thought likely to soothe
his mind. “Oh, Madam!” he exclaimed,
“why should I wrong your generous good-
“ness

“ nefs by a partial confidence? Why should
“ I conceal from you that the object of my
“ fond and faithful love is your enchant-
“ ing friend---the charming---the all-
“ perfect Emilia!” Mrs. Woodville was
less amazed at this confession, than he ex-
pected her to be. She was well versed in
the knowledge of the human heart---and
had seen all the movements of his.—Af-
suming an air of complacency, she there-
fore employed every argument in her
power to soften his distress. “ I see,” said
she, “ you are one of these children of re-
“ finement, who place the evils of hu-
“ manity in the darkest point of view.—
“ But trust me, my beloved friend, whom
“ experience has taught to judge, this is
“ not a point of wisdom. The ways of
“ life are thorny enough, without our
“ adding to them. You are young, and,

“ although I applaud your virtuous reso-
“ lution in refusing to do violence to your
“ heart, by uniting with a woman you can-
“ not esteem, and equally admire your
“ filial piety in resolving never to add to
“ your father’s displeasure, by marrying in
“ opposition to his will, I cannot approve
“ of your thus indulging despair: but
“ would rather encourage you to admit
“ smiling hope, and look forward to some
“ happy event in the bosom of futurity,
“ which may secure you the worthy object
“ of your choice; and which, I ingenuously
“ own, is the first, and shall be the con-
“ stant prayer of my soul.”

He pressed her hands to his heart, as
these soothing accents stole on his ear. He
invoked heaven to shower its choicest
benedictions around her, and earnestly en-
“ quired

quired if she really thought him worthy so inestimable a treasure. "I think you"--- she mildly replied, "worthy of each other; " Emilia and the Wise Disposer must decide " the rest." An interval of silence ensued. Mrs. Woodville then obeyed the summons of Martha, to attend to her domestic duties; and Fitzhorton retired to his chamber, to indulge, unmolested, the felicity that dawned on his mind.

C H A P. XIII.

EMILIA was seated at the parlour window, revolving in her mind the occurrences of the morning, when Arthur Everard appeared, walking slowly up the avenue, his arms folded, his eyes declined mournfully on the ground, and the native cheerfulness of his deportment entirely vanished. Emilia instantly observed the change, and, eager to enquire the cause, hastened to meet him. Arthur stretched out his hands toward her; deep distress was pictured on his features, but he was unable to give it utterance. "Mr. Everard---" said Emilia, smiling sweetly in his face---"Oh, Madam,

“Madam;” he suddenly exclaimed, “tell
“me, have you seen my sister? Charlotte,
“our dear Charlotte, is she not here?” He
paused—then looking mournfully in Emilia’s face, he added, “No, I see she is
“not. Oh, what is become of my sister?
“My aged father’s heart will break, and
“we shall never taste of peace again unless
“we find her.” He clasped Emilia’s hands
with a look of exquisite distress, and they
proceeded on with pensive step. Mrs.
Woodville met them at the door of the
house. The altered looks of Arthur excited her surprise, which was succeeded by
the most lively concern, when he explained
the cause of it. Charlotte had been missed
at breakfast, and every research after her
had proved unsuccessful. Confusion and
sorrow reigned at Everard Park. Every
conjecture increased their distress, and

added to their perplexity. Her recent indisposition, and the alarming expressions that had then escaped her, all arose to their remembrance, and filled her father's mind with the most dreadful apprehensions. The sensibility and tender affection of the amiable Alicia, felt a deep wound---and the strong feelings of Arthur preyed upon his heart.—“ I will search each corner of “ this earth ” he cried with an empassioned air, “ in pursuit of my sister, and Heaven “ will aid my design. Infinite Mercy will, “ I humbly trust, smile on the exertions of “ fraternal love, and restore the dear girl to “ our united prayers.”—He pressed Emilia's hand to his trembling lips, uttered a scarcely articulate adieu, and darted from them. Fitzhorton descended the stairs at the same instant. Alarmed at the tears of Mrs. Woodville and Emilia, he eagerly enquired

enquired the cause, and when informed of it, proposed going immediately to Everard Park, to render any assistance in his power. Mrs. Woodville warmly applauded the design, and as the accident he had so lately met with, rendered him unable to walk, his horses were ordered, and Mrs. Woodville soon followed with Emilia. But what a melancholy change had a few short hours occasioned at Everard Park? The first object that presented itself, as they entered, was Alicia struggling in convulsive agonies in the arms of Charles Melmoth, while her afflicted parent hung sorrowing over her, and Mr. and Mrs. Clifton were administering all in their power to relieve her, and console him. "Oh, Madam, my children, my children!" pathetically exclaimed Mr. Everard, raising his eyes suffused with tears to Mrs. Woodville. Emilia

seated herself by Alicia's side. The convulsions were succeeded by a death-like stillness, and she lay, deprived of animation, in the arms of the deeply affected Melmoth, whose tears fell fast on her pallid face. Mr. Everard regarded her some moments in silence, while Mrs. Woodville was busied in applying medicines, which she deemed likely to prove restorative. Emilia lent every assistance in her power, and Alicia began to recover. She first raised her lovely eyes, full of gratitude, to the amiable Melmoth; then throwing her arms around her father's neck, she poured out her emotions in his bosom, and the tears that streamed from her eyes, relieved the oppression at her heart. Arthur entered in the midst of this affecting scene. Distraction marked his air and features, and he interrupted the inquiries of Mr. Everard,

Everard, by declaring that Charlotte had been seen at day-break by some peasants in the neighbouring hamlet, walking with hurried step, supported by the arm of a gentleman, whose face they should know again; that she sighed deeply as she passed them, and they observed tears on her cheek. She seemed ready to sink to the earth. Her companion spoke to her with great earnestness. They quickened their pace, descended into a glen, near which the villagers met them, and were soon out of sight. "Then," exclaimed Mr. Everard, "we are all undone! Oh, my poor, "unhappy, lost child! what wretch has thus "deprived me of thee? Who can it be, "that has deceived my Charlotte, and "murdered me?" Alicia's tears flowed afresh. Arthur leaned over the back of
her

her chair, in silent anguish, and every heart present shared their deep affliction.

Mrs. Woodville saw that their case admitted of no alleviation in her power to communicate; yet felt herself unable to quit them, and Fitzhorton and Emilia were quite absorbed in sympathetic grief. A sad interval of silence ensued, when Mr. Everard complained of illness, and retired to his chamber, attended by Arthur and Alicia.—Mrs. Woodville and her young friends then hastened home to dinner, after promising to repeat their visit in the evening.

Thus was the day, designed for Jubilee, converted into a scene of heart-felt sorrow.—So sudden are the revolutions of
human

human affairs, and so impossible is it for mortality to look forward, and say the next moment is mine, that he alone is wise, who improves the present.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

THE disagreeable consequences which Fitzhorton had experienced from the trepidation of Emilia, were removed by the kind attention of Mrs. Woodville, and he accompanied their evening's walk to Everard Park, anxious for the fate of its worthy possessor. Arthur saluted them with the welcome assurance of his father's being infinitely better than when they had left him in the morning; and sighing deeply at the recollection of Charlotte, he conducted them into another apartment. A stranger, seated by Alicia's side, was the first

first object that struck the attention of the Ladies, and Arthur taking each of their hands, led them forward, to introduce them to their noble visitor; while Fitzhorton expressed his surprize, and could but ill conceal his chagrin at meeting, thus mal-a-propos, with the Earl of Villamont; nor did the Earl appear less astonished or more pleased at the rencontre. He seemed to consider the refusal of his sister's offered hand as a high indignity; and Fitzhorton, equally stung by the insolence of his air and manner, took no pains to conceal the contemptuous light in which he had always held him. Mrs. Woodville, therefore, to prevent any disagreeable consequences, which she was fearful might arise from this want of cordiality, hastened their return home, after expressing the pleasure she felt at Mr. Everard's recovery, and

and consoling their sorrow, by suggesting every cheering hope that reason could justify, for the happy restoration of their beloved Charlotte.

“ I am surely the most unfortunate fellow in the world ! ” exclaimed Fitzhorton, as they quitted Everard Park—“ I have destroyed my friend.—Poor Melmoth, I have ruined thee.”—“ Ruined him,” echoed Emilia, as she leaned on his arm, and looked pensively in his face. “ Yes, my Angel.” He paused—and added—“ Pardon me,” then again paused—and addressing himself to Mrs. Woodville, “ Madam,” said he, “ Melmoth will never again be admitted within my father’s doors—and I am grieved to the soul—the more grieved, because I know him to possess a great and generous heart.

“ His

“ His having been seen here with me, by
“ that *noble villain* we have just left, is, I
“ fear, a death-stroke to Charles’s bright
“ prospects ; for my father will be inform-
“ ed of it, through pique to me, and he
“ will be deemed an abettor of my late
“ conduct.”

Emilia could ill conceal her admiration of Fitzhorton’s generous emotions for the fate of his friend, while Mrs. Woodville used every mild persuasion to convince him that his fears were rather the children of fancy than reason.

“ The accident of Alicia Everard, when
“ mentioned, will easily account for his
“ being here,” said Mrs. Woodville, “ and
“ if your father is at first betrayed into an
“ unjust anger, truth, and the exertions of
“ Mr.

“ Mr. Everard and myself, will soon restore him.”—Fitzhorton shook his head.
“ Besides,” added Mrs. Woodville, “ your father would most probably have known of Melmoth’s being here, without the assistance of the Earl of Villamont.”—
“ True, Madam,” replied Fitzhorton, with eagerness, “ and none would more warmly approve his heroism in the rescue of Alicia, than my father ; (for he has a truly noble spirit): but you forget, my dear Madam, it is my being seen here that I dread his knowing. All that can be said will prove useless in that case ; and my worthy friend will, I much fear, taste the bitter consequences.”

“ I see,” said Mrs. Woodville, “ you will persist in using the sombre pencil, and have quite forgot my advice of the morning.”

“ No,

“ No, Madam,” he replied, “ I never
“ can forget your salutary lessons ; nor can
“ I forget my apprehensions for the future
“ fate of Charles Melmoth. He is one of
“ the most amiable characters that can
“ exist ; and there is but one object in the
“ world dearer to my heart. From earliest
“ infancy he has been my companion, my
“ friend, and favourite charge. The ad-
“ vantage of a few years on my part, has
“ enabled me to assist his early studies ; and
“ I never found any task so delightful, as
“ that of enlarging his opening ideas, and
“ directing his judgment. His sweetness
“ of temper, and gratitude of heart, would
“ abundantly repay any services ; but to
“ be the means of injuring the being whom
“ I have contributed to cherish, and who
“ has now attained the most promising ma-
“ turity, is what I cannot think of unem-
“ passioned.”

“passioned.”—“It would be neither just
“nor natural if you could,” said Emilia;
“but yet, let us hope.”—“Yes, my dear
“young friends,” interrupted Mrs. Wood-
ville, “let us all hope, while hope is to
“be found. Hope is the smiling power
“that supports us through life—and
“cheers us in the awful hour of death. In
“all my distresses, she has been my con-
“stant friend. Never left me to dispon-
“dency, but whispered the sweetest con-
“solations to my sufferings. Nor has her
“kindness exceeded her fidelity. She
“gave me no assurances, which are not
“fully realized. Mercy have always fol-
“lowed me, and happiness has now
“crowned the evening of my days.”

“Then, let us hope, my pensive friend,”
cried Fitzhorton, gently tapping Emilia’s
cheek,

cheek, "for an equal portion of virtue
"and happiness. Let us endeavour to be
"as wise, that we may one day taste as
"high a felicity as our respected friend."
Emilia looked up, half smiling, and by the
pale light of the moon, they saw Martha,
with Fitzhorton's Spaniel on her lap, sit-
ting under an elm before the gate, impa-
tiently waiting their return.

It was an enchanting evening; they took
a turn through the garden, ascended the
mount, and contemplated the beauties of
the universe. The ocean, at a small dis-
tance, was smooth and serene, and its shin-
ing expanse recalled interesting mementos
to the minds of Emilia and Fitzhorton.
On that beach, the latter reflected, I pre-
served the life of the most lovely of women.
There, thought Emilia, my existence was
pro-

prolonged, by the most amiable of mankind. They were both softened to tears. It was unobserved by Mrs. Woodville. "Great Power!" she exclaimed, "how
"full of perfection, how replete with or-
"der, symmetry, and grace, are all thy
"works? And yet there are men who dare
"even to doubt thy existence. Men, too,
"who scorn the name of vice, and tread
"the strictest path of pure morality. Such
"is the weak presumption of human na-
"ture, we often carry our researches be-
"yond the limits allowed us, and these
"sublime truths, which our weak reason
"cannot investigate, we blindly refuse to
"believe." They seated themselves on a bench, and each was absorbed in thought. Fitzhorton held Emilia's hand till it was wet with his tears, while she sat both affected and surprized at his strong emotions. Mrs.
Woodville

Woodville arose, complained of the coldness of the evening air, and told Fitzhorton he had infected her with one of his gloomy fits, and proposed their quitting the garden. "I quit it with reluctance," "Madam," said he, "because it is, perhaps, the last visit I shall ever pay it." Emilia started. "To-morrow," he added, "fate tears me from this charming spot, endeared to my heart by every tender tie."—"To-morrow!" exclaimed Mrs. Woodville, "Why to-morrow?"—"Because," he replied, with emotion, "Heaven denies me the felicity of a longer stay. I said, I was only come to bid you farewell—and I have already exceeded my destined time. More is not in my power; necessity now conducts me to Afric's burning shores, where I am ensured a profitable employment. I wish

I "a little

“ a little longer time, on Melmoth’s account, on many other accounts: But we must submit to what is irremediable. I am expected to embark this night; to-morrow is my latest hour. My father’s displeasure forces me to this step. I cannot live here, I must therefore accept a subsistence where it is offered me; and that Being, in whose hands we all are, will, I doubt not, one day restore me to England and happiness.”—His voice was scarcely articulate as he concluded these words.—He pressed Mrs. Woodville and Emilia’s hands to his lips, and to his heart; he covered them with kisses; then begging Mrs. Woodville’s permission to retire, he hastened to his apartment, and they saw him no more for the night.

CHAP. XV.

ANGUISH preyed upon the heart of Emilia, and the morning dawn was unwelcome, because it was ushered in, with the painful remembrance of Fitzhorton's departure. "I shall lose him," said she, "I shall lose him for ever, and the universe will be a dreadful void to the wretched Emilia."

Pale and dejected, Fitzhorton met her at the parlour door. Mrs. Woodville had not yet left her apartment. Emilia raised her sweetly languid eyes; the altered looks of her amiable friend struck her to the soul, and the words—"Are you not well?" fal-

tered on her lips. His heart seemed bursting—he was silent; but leading her to a chair, he seated himself beside her, and gazing tenderly in her face for some moments, he exclaimed, “Well! O, adorable Emilia! how should I be well, when about to be deprived of your dear society? Pity beams in your charming eyes—but tell me, Emilia, generously tell me, is there no tenderer sensation exists in your heart for the wretched Fitz-
“horton? Let me but hope for a place in your gentle bosom, and I defy the storms of fate and fortune. Forgive me, charming maid; I am too bold, but time admits of no delays now—and I could not leave you without declaring, that surely
“never man loved as I do. You, Emilia, are my fate, and on you I depend for life or death. Yet suffer not the amiable
“sweetness

“sweetness of your nature to yield a reluc-
“tant heart. My love is jealous, and
“would be unsatisfied with a passion less
“ardent than its own. If cold friendship
“is all you can return, say so. I will bless
“you, and endeavour to be resigned to my
“fate; but if a more lively emotion warms
“your heart, the generous assurance will
“support me, till Heaven hears our united
“prayers, and removes the cruel barriers
“to our happiness.”

Emilia sobbed in his bosom; her face
was covered with blushes, and she mur-
mured out—“Ah, my amiable friend---
“are you then a stranger to the heart of
“Emilia? Is it necessary for my tongue
“to reveal the state of my mind? Surely
“I am not such an adept in concealment;

“nor can you be unversed in the language
“of the soul.”

“Then I am happy!” he exclaimed,
“We will live for each other—look for-
“ward to years of rapturous felicity, and
“submit with fortitude to present misfor-
“tunes. The Almighty preserved you
“from the bosom of the deep, to make me
“the happiest of mortals, and the remainder
“of my days will be one act of gratitude
“to him for the transcendant blessing.
“Grieve not then, my love, at the present
“separation, it will but enhance the value
“of the happiness, which I trust is in store
“for us.—With the firmest reliance on
“Mrs. Woodville, I now go, without a
“single murmur, assured of the affection of
“my Emilia.---Trials are the lot of mor-
“tality—and truly painful as absence is to
“those

“those who love like me, the joys of a
“happy return will soon banish the un-
“pleasing remembrance, and render us
“doubly sensible of the felicity that suc-
“ceeds it.” He pressed her lovely lips
with ardor, and held her some moments in
his arms, dissolved in tears.

“You are a philosopher!” she exclaimed,
disengaging herself from his embrace—
“Wou’d to Heaven I was the same. But,
“alas, I am a poor, weak, fond girl. Oh,
“Fitzhorton, remember, remember—” she
added, with empassioned air and voice,
“my life, my happiness—every thing de-
“pends on you. Ah---what have I said?
“—Your father! Have you forgot your
“father? your solemn vow, never to wed
“unless with his assent?”

“No, my charming girl,” he fondly replied, “that I could never forget. It is that happy event to which I look forward. My father’s heart will be softened by my absence, and we shall be blest.”

The sound of Mrs. Woodville’s voice broke off their conversation. She entered with her usual cheerfulness, and seemed not to observe the traces of tears on Emilia’s countenance, though it secretly pained her to the soul.

Fitzhorton’s servant appeared ere breakfast was removed, to inform his master, that his orders were obeyed, and every thing was ready for their departure. He arose with perturbation, strove to express his gratitude, his friendship, his unalterable regard for Mrs. Woodville, but was obliged to leave the task unfinished; and,
after

after a cordial embrace, again he pressed Emilia to his beating heart, and left them in a state of mind not to be described.— Deeply affected, Mrs. Woodville forebore to intrude on the sorrow which she too plainly saw painted on the features of Emilia, and retiring to her chamber, Emilia walked into the garden to indulge the emotions that were unconquerable. There she remained till Martha summoned her to dinner. The anguish of her heart was succeeded by a mild resignation. She endeavoured to console herself by looking forward to the blissful prospects which Fitzhorton had pointed out, and beseeching Heaven to subdue each repining thought, her duty to Mrs. Woodville recalled her wonted serenity. But Fitzhorton soon became the subject of their conversation, and, after some prelude, Emilia confessed all that had passed between them.

“ I would not,” said Mrs. Woodville,
“ encourage either of you in the indul-
“ gence of a hopeless passion: but your
“ hearts were entangled ere I perceived it;
“ and now I know of no charm to disen-
“ gage them. I see you both possess that
“ unhappy ardor of disposition, that you
“ cannot command your hearts, and any
“ argument of mine will be in vain. I
“ think it an unfortunate attachment—but
“ there is no fathoming the unfathomable
“ depths of Providence, to which, with sin-
“ cere prayers for your every good, I cheer-
“ fully commit you, consoled with this
“ belief, that you are both extremely ami-
“ able, and to be good, is to be happy.”

Ten thousand times Emilia thanked her
goodness; and Mr. and Mrs. Clifton ap-
peared at the gate. “ We are the harbin-
“ gers

“gers of surprising tidings,” said the latter, as they entered. She threw herself breathless into a chair, and Mrs. Woodville earnestly besought an explanation of what she had said. “Be not alarmed, my dear “Ladies,” said Mr. Clifton, “but, the “Earl of Villamont is discovered to be the “seducer of Charlotte Everard. One of “the peasants, who saw Charlotte go off, “met the Earl at the bottom of the lawn, “with Arthur, and instantly recollecting “his features, boldly accused him; and as “cowardice is always inseparable from “guilt, he was unable to deny the assertion. “The impetuous spirit of Arthur instantly “took fire; he loaded him with very opprobrious epithets, demanded satisfaction “for his sister’s injured honour, or vowed “immediate vengeance. The Earl trembled—Arthur forced him back to the “house.

“house. Everard Park was converted
“into a scene of confusion. Terrified by
“threats, the Earl has at length discovered
“the retreat of Charlotte, promised to
“marry her, confessed it was him who
“made the attempt on Alicia, whom he
“long admired, intreats forgiveness of them
“all, and professes himself a penitent.
“Arthur is gone to conduct Charlotte to her
“expecting friends, and we flew hither to
“inform you of these extraordinary events.”

Mrs. Woodville and Emilia expressed the joy it gave them to find that the misfortunes of Charlotte were likely to terminate so happily; although they still feared that all the rank and wealth of the Earl of Villamont would be insufficient to render him an enviable husband. Mr. and Mrs. Clifton hastened their return to Everard Park,

Park, eager to know the result of Arthur's expedition, telling Mrs. Woodville, that when tranquillity was again restored among their friends, they should think of revisiting London, as Mr. Clifton's presence was required there by some unlooked-for events.

CHAP.

C H A P. XVI.

IN a deep recess, about a day's ride from Everard Park, Charlotte Everard was placed under a feigned name, in the house of a widow lady, reduced from a more prosperous state, and but lately resident in that part of the world. Her betrayer had never visited her since her seclusion, and had only removed her from her father's, (where he had long been a frequent and welcome visitor) to conceal his own villainies, and the better to forward his designs upon Alicia. In this lonely asylum her worthy brother found her, weighed down almost to the grave by illness, and
anguish

anguish of heart. He clasped her, weeping, in his affectionate embrace; whispered the kindest consolations in her ear, and told her he was come to restore her to virtue and happiness. But she fell insensible on his bosom, and it was long ere the exertions of her kind hostess could restore her to reason. At length she became capable of listening to what he came to impart, and pressing his cheek to her lips; she looked up to Heaven, and seemed to doubt the testimony of her senses. Several hours glided by, in reciprocal enquiries:—she owned her heart strongly attached to the Earl of Villamont; but yet, from his recent conduct, doubted of happiness. As soon as she could recover her scattered spirits, she took an affectionate leave of the old lady, and accompanied her brother to
a scene,

a scene, which she both wished and trembled to contemplate.

Her aged father's arms were open to receive her. Alicia sobbed out her emotions on her bosom; the Earl pressed her tenderly to his heart, and was melted to tears. All present were deeply affected—and no one more than the amiable, generous Melmoth. The day passed in a kind of gloomy serenity, and the next morning saw the solemn vows of the Earl of Villamont confirmed, and tranquillity restored to the inhabitants of Everard Park. From a principle of delicacy the nuptials were as private as possible. Charlotte was habited in a plain white muslin, and might have sat for a model of elegant simplicity. Her figure was naturally beautiful, and her features interesting; but the air of langour diffused

diffused over her whole person, now rendered her strikingly so. The Earl evinced great tenderness, and seemed to regard her with the most lively admiration, although his eyes sometimes wandered toward the more beautiful Alicia, and looked with envy on the favoured Melmoth. But he certainly strove to conquer these emotions, and think only of Charlotte, whose happiness seemed more than a counterbalance for her late sufferings.

While these transactions were going on at Everard Park, Emilia was secretly deploring the loss of Fitzhorton, and Mrs. Woodville exerting her utmost endeavours to banish it from her heart. But how insufficient is all the force of friendship, to subdue the tyranny of love? Care and anxiety were become the inmates of Emilia's

lia's breast; and the frequent tear, and heart-wrung sigh, betrayed what she wished to conceal. An invitation from Everard Park, proved a respite from the pensive sadness by which they were surrounded. Their benevolent hearts expanded with joy at the pleasing novelty which was there displayed. The happy Charlotte could not sufficiently express her delight at again seeing them; and the Earl, influenced by the example of all around him, testified his lively esteem, and declared, that their future friendship would greatly augment his happiness. Charlotte earnestly besought them to accompany their party the following day, to one of the Earl's country seats, where they purposed to remain some time; but Mrs. Woodville declined the invitation, promising her a visit at some future time. Everard Park was the following

lowing day deserted by all but its master, who pleaded his years, as a reason for remaining at home, and who spent the greatest part of his time in the society of Mrs. Woodville and Emilia. From the Earl's seat, his bride and friends accompanied him to the Metropolis, where the far-advanced pregnancy of Charlotte obliged him to give out that they had been married many months. The narrow heart, and weak understanding of his sister, Lady Dorothy, impelled her at first to behave with great hauteur to his bride and her friends, although nearly allied by blood; but the influence of her brother, at length intimidated her into an apparent cordiality, and the truly amiable and exemplary conduct of Charlotte, triumphed o'er every prejudice. In a very short time she gave an heir to the Earl, which greatly augmented

ed his attachment, and his follies were all obliterated by his blameless discharge of the duties of a husband and a father.

It was about this time, that one evening, just as Mrs. Woodville and Emilia were going to pay their evening visit at Everard Park, that they saw a stranger alight at the gate, the dignity of whose countenance and air was rendered infinitely striking by his sable habit, and an air of deep sorrow, which overspread his whole person. He enquired, with agitated voice, for Mrs. Woodville, and was shewn in by Martha. He threw himself into a chair, and was silent for some moments, then addressing Mrs. Woodville, with impassioned air, "Forgive my emotions, Madam!" he exclaimed, "they are the agonies of parental distress." Emilia regarded his features,

features, his air, his dress, with deep attention. A dreadful presentment invaded her heart, and she became insensible to all around her. As soon as she recovered, she was conveyed out of the room, and the stranger resumed his discourse. "I was
"about to enquire, Madam," said he,
"but my feelings now too plainly assure
"me, that the lovely form, who has just
"left us, is Emilia De St. Aubigne, the
"worthy choice of my deplored, my amiable, my murdered child!" Mrs. Woodville started, and turned pale as ashes.
"Yes, Madam," he added, "in me you
"behold the wretched father of Alleyne
"Fitzhorton. In me you see the tyrant
"that forced him from his native land, and,
"urged by the most cruel rigor, precipitated him into an early grave. O!
"blindness of parental prejudice! May
"the

“ the anguish that must henceforth await
“ me, be a warning to others to profit by
“ my sad example.” Here his emotions prevented his utterance, and an interval of melancholy silence ensued. He then drew a letter from his pocket, written by his expiring son, wherein he related the story of Emilia, owned his strong attachment, and most earnestly recommended her to his father’s future protection.

“ The name of Emilia De St. Aubigne,”
said Mr. Fitzhorton, “ strikes my heart
“ with double force, as the dearest friend
“ of my soul, the favourite companion of
“ my early years, married a Lady of that
“ name, and they both fell a sacrifice to
“ the union. Should this amiable girl,
“ then, prove their offspring, it will add
“ to the anguish I at present feel, but en-
“ dear

“dear her for ever to my soul.” A loud ringing at the gate prevented his enlarging, and another stranger enquired for Mrs. Woodville. He entered, in extreme agitation, and on being told by Martha, that she had company, begged to speak with her alone. She readily complied with his request. “Madam,” said he, approaching her with trembling step, “you are the protectress of Emilia De St. Aubigne.” She told him she was. He paused, sighed deeply, and added, “It is of her I come to speak. Fate directed me to the spot where her faithful lover breathed his last. I saw him expire, and this packet he entrusted to my care.” Mrs. Woodville opened the packet, and found it contain a bequest of some hundreds, which Fitzhorton had left in the Bank, to his beloved Emilia, and his own miniature set with
brilliant,

brilliants, and suspended by a small gold chain. Mrs. Woodville wept over these testimonies of unfeigned love, and was insensible to the presence of the stranger, until he interrupted her sorrow by saying, "This, Madam, is the least material part of my business here. This letter," said he, giving it with tremulous hands, "Madam, will explain my meaning; but let me not behold Emilia de St. Aubigne." He arose, wished every blessing might await Mrs. Woodville—and pronouncing a scarcely articulate adieu, he clasped his hands in agony, and quitted the house.

Mrs. Woodville hastened to Mr. Fitz-
horton; shewed him his son's bequest;
related what had just past; and opened the
mysterious letter, which contained these
words:

To

To *Mrs. WOODVILLE.*

“ The uncle of Emilia De St. Aubigne,
“ the murderer of her father, returns from
“ voluntary exile, to do an act of justice,
“ and end the remnant of his wretched days
“ in solitude and penitance.

“ Urged by bigotry, I took the life of an
“ amiable man. I precipitated my sister
“ into an untimely grave, because, in the
“ language of prejudice, she had wedded
“ an heretick. The eldest pledge of their
“ mutual love, a boy, was left in England,
“ with a servant in whom they confided,
“ and who was to have followed with the
“ child to Italy, where they sought an asy-
“ lum from my threatened vengeance ; but
“ this servant committed a crime for which

K

“ he

“ he was banished to Africa. Their
“ youngest blessing I cruelly tore from her
“ expiring mother’s arms, and placed in a
“ convent, but even refused her father’s
“ name ; I then availed myself of a com-
“ mand that was offered me secretly, (by
“ a rigid catholic, who applauded my
“ cruel zeal) and escaped the punishment
“ I merited, by embarking for the spot
“ where the amiable Fitzhorton breathed
“ his last. There, too, wonderful Provi-
“ dence directed the convict who had been
“ entrusted with my sister’s son. From him
“ I learnt, that ere he left his native land,
“ he had deposited the infant at a gentle-
“ man’s door, who proves to be the father
“ of Alleyne Fitzhorton. From this ama-
“ zing combination of events, and from
“ the discovery of Emilia’s story, from
“ the lips of her lover, and the glowing
“ picture

“picture he drew of her unequal merits,
“my heart was melted to repentance. I
“received his latest charge, and having
“bestowed my fortune between those I
“have so basely wronged, I bid the world
“eternally adieu. May they be happy,
“Madam, and their protectors be reward-
“ed, is the last prayer that will linger
“round my heart.”

Astonishment sealed the lips of Mrs. Woodville, and Mr. Fitzhorton. Charles Melmoth was the son of his friend, the brother of Emilia.

Their father's fortune, which was not large, had descended to a distant, but opulent branch of his family, who being assured of the truth of these facts, readily restored it, and Charles (no longer Mel-

moth, but Fairville) was united to the amiable choice of his heart, Alicia Everard.—But fatal was the sequel to the lovely Emilia:

“ Her heart was broken by the sum of ills

“ Which, one by one, she had endured.”

She drooped daily. The image of Fitz-
horton possessed her whole soul, and vain
was every endeavour to banish him one
moment from her remembrance. Change
of situation, novelty, amusement which she
could not relish, all proved useless. She
languished, unrepining, many months, and
then breathed out her spotless soul in the
arms of her brother. Her loss embittered
the days of Mrs. Woodville, no longer
was her solitude delightful, she therefore
complied with the entreaty of Mr. and Mrs.
Fairville, and ended her life with them.

Mr.

Mr. Fitzhorton raised a noble monument to the memories of Emilia and his ever regretted son, and bequeathed his whole fortune to Charles Fairville.

Among all the mourners occasioned by the loss of Emilia, none was more a sufferer than the worthy Arthur Everard.— It diffused a gloom over all his future days; For her loved sake he vowed a single life, and often declared, that the poet's assertion of

“ To be good is to be happy,”
is not always verified in this world.

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